The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Leslie Conrad, Jr.:

POETS TO PREACHERS

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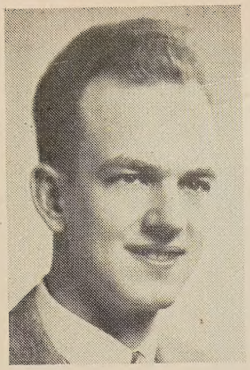
VOL. XXII, NO. 5 MAY, 1951



By Edward John Carnell

THE GRAVE PERIL OF

SEVERAL dangerous years have elapsed since the appearance of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, "the most important publication of 1946." From this new perspective we may safely predict that the second phase of the version's struggle for existence is about to commence. The novelty and freshness which hitherto contributed to its overcoming of prejudice and indifference may no longer be presupposed, for familiarity has set in among us. From this time forward the work must rest on its own long-term merits.

If the Christian church should presume that the universal reception of this version will be a pleasantly automatic process, however, a tactical blunder of major magnitude would be committed. A successful promoter must always reckon with the gap which separates a product's excellence from the general public's appreciation of it. Aware of this difficulty, an alert distributor will advertise, advertise, advertise. An unheralded value is but another rose born to blush unseen.

Propaganda and Human Behavior

Not the least of the mysteries attending the complexity of human behavior is the tendency among men to pattern their own values after those initiated by trends within the social order. Fashions—not mind alone—control the interests of men. Not infrequently an inferior piece of merchandise will enjoy a greater public reception than the superior because it enjoyed the backing of strategic propaganda. Values may be world-moving in their potentialities, but their acceptance by those whom they ought to move is always at the mercy of the advertising program which promotes them. Very few consumers purchase things on the advice of abstract, scientific reports. Our purchases are complexly compounded with a desire to enjoy egotistic approval within the social mind.

One purpose of advertising is to steer the cycles of mass preference. As the number of new subscribers increases, the power of individual resistance diminishes, until in the end all but the most resolutely individualistic are drawn into the vortex.

The health of the Revised Standard Version at this mid-century hour is uncertain, for its reception has been spotty and halfhearted. Just as the translation ought by all measure to be coming into its full rights, unblushing articles and reviews continue to exhibit the same distressing candor: "King James Triumphs Again." The impression created abroad is that the Authorized text has been blessed with a singular providential care, thus entitling it to a final regal place in the devotional life of the Christian church. The language of King James is presumed to be such a unique revelation vehicle that it is predestined to endure to the end of time.

This strife of versions has incubated a new cult in Protestantism, the King-Jamesolatrists. The rights of absoluteness and finality have been consciously or unconsciously transferred to a document which *ex hypothesi* suffers from the same relativities which attend any piece of translation work. Bibliolatry, that age-old drag within the spiritual life of the church, is apparently becoming more specialized. Adoration of a *version* is now displacing generic worship of the Bible.

The Funeral Dirge

Very few are sensitive to the true problem which this situation creates. John Q. Public—the one who knows nothing about the history of biblical manuscripts (and cares even less)—finds this issue of the versions both boring and academic. His uncritical hunch is that the Bible wafted gently out of heaven, manna-like, and that the "old book" is still good enough for him Since the Authorized Version has been delivering his family safely to heaven for no few generations, why tamper with it? And thus the issue is peacefully laid to rest.

In the course of his tuneful exaltation of the finality of King James, however, the merry little piper overlooks the salient fact that he is actually sounding pitch for the death march of the science of Bible translation itself. Modesty does not in-

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A fervent plea to preachers to use the Revised Standard instead of the King James version of scripture

PROVINCIALIZING JESUS

struct the devotee of King James to venture that the version *may* not be displaced. The formula is the undismayed prophecy that it will *never* be unseated from its place of indisputable leadership in the church. In short, a universal negative judgment is passed against the outside possibilities of human creativity. No medieval pope could put his thumb on the windpipe of scientific progress any more effectively. Whenever the partial is prematurely converted into the final, scientific progress is vitiated. Why struggle for tomorrow's measure of progress if we have already reached the highest of which we are capable?

The Real Issue

Be not deceived. The issue is not whether there is or is not beauty and literary tradition in the King James Version. There is only one matter in question: Have we reached a point in human creativity which is exempt from relativity and partiality? If the answer to this crucial question is Yes, then let us resolutely close down our centers of biblical research and put our translation experts out to pasture. If our answer is No, then let us courageously adjust our devotional habits to the intrinsic merits of the competing versions. Let us desist from that scientific approach to the Authorized Version which proclaims in the name of providence that King James "will never be displaced."

What we must fear most of all in the above pretension is the word "never," for it contains all the ingredients of scientific and cultural stagnation. Dictators do their best work against the backdrop of a social mind which is already in the uncritical habit of pronouncing finalities over relativities. Thus, whoever discourages the right to prepare new versions of the Bible, in order that he may preserve the traditions which an older text has accumulated, may in the end lose both his freedom and the biblical text itself.

Virus of Complacancy

King-Jamesolatrists are injecting a virus of complacency into one glorious side of human creativity. The well-being of an individual is so intimately compounded with the lively flow of his creative vitalities that personal happiness cannot long exist when the latter are throttled. Free potentialities are like a mountain stream: when unimpeded in flow, the waters dance and sparkle together; but when dammed and blocked, the enraged deeps become filled with revenge.

It would be a singular grief if, in our zeal to retain reverence for the traditions of King James, we permitted a relative translation to be crowned with literary finality. Supplying Christians with fresh, crisp versions of Holy Scripture has hitherto comprised one of the most praiseworthy expressions of creativeness. In the work of translation a disciplined, scientific patience is uniquely joined with the dynamic of prophetic vision. Whenever the results of this labor lie unappreciated, one can hardly blame those who, still searching for progress through freedom, cry, "If this be grace, give me nature."

The present hour is far from ordinary. When the American Standard Version passed from the scene of influence, it was easy to conclude that the failure was partly due to its novelty. But what shall be said now that the second great work has been attempted? If the Revised Standard Version should fall by the wayside in favor of an uncritical devotion to the Authorized text, it will then be very convenient for protagonists of King James to conclude that revisers are, in effect, "striving against God." Since the outstretched hand of God's providence has presumably commissioned itself to protect the 17th century version, all who seek to institute improvements in the text are guilty of "resisting God's will."

The Christ of the 17th Century

This picture of God's relation to the English text may be mystically exciting to some, but it hardly fosters the health of Christianity. Dangers lurk on every hand. If God does not recognize relative validity in those expressions of creativity which society is forced to call partial, then the sluice gate is again opened for a new tyrant who, through the employment of his own roster of cultural finalities, may destroy the foundations of Christian culture itself.

Not the least of the proofs of Christ's rightful lordship over the Christian church is the embodiment in his own person of the catholic man. His revelation of the plan of salvation was accomplished without resort to the peculiarities of race, national stamp, parentage or culture; there is nothing offensively esoteric or clandestine in his doctrines; his words are at home in every part of the inhabited world; as the Son of Man he is the common possession of men in all generations.

Christ taught that individuals who are lovingly related to God and neighbor will be men who assign a proportionate, relative place to all other values in life. Jesus, therefore, is always contemporary.

Since we learn of Christ only through biblical revelation, however, it follows that the power of the gospel to affect the minds and hearts of men is directly conditioned to the clarity of the words which comprise its written form. "If you in a tongue utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said" (I Cor. 14:9)? Elizabethan sentences may be exciting vehicles for the delicate literary tones of a given period in English history, but they are hardly appropriate as a medium of expression for the message of salvation. There must be no ambiguity when issues of life and death are at stake. Observe the word "exit": it is simple, clear, and appropriately displayed.

Language Difficulties

When the message of the gospel is cast in the language peculiarities of a bygone day, it is inevitable that the Christ of the gospel will suffer from a parallel obscurity. If Christ's language is provincial, his person likewise becomes provincial. There can be no escape from this concomitance. The child in Sunday school who reads the gospel in a literary form unfamiliar to him will tend to remain puzzled about the Christ who speaks in so strange a way. To obviate this problem, therefore, men have been periodically commissioned to render the original text of the Bible in language expressions easily assimilated by the common man.

It is open and apparent that the King James Version submerges the catholic Son of Man beneath a "wotteth, wisteth, letteth" veil of literary archaisms. Instead of presenting the gospel to men in a language that they readily understand, the Authorized text speaks in a 17th century tongue. The result of this union of the gospel with an outdated language framework is a needless provincializing of Jesus Christ. Christ is peculiarly tied in with the speech forms of an outmoded cultural pattern. Thus, before a sinner can embrace the message of God's love, he must penetrate a thick wall of language obscurity. Surely the cause of the Master is inefficiently engineered whenever we encourage the universal use of a version which blunts the contemporaneity of the Savior of men.

While many convictions separate Protestant bodies from enjoying fellowship, there is one proposition which is contested by no one who bears the name Christian: the person of Jesus Christ is *sine qua non* for the spiritual health of mankind. Whether we conceive of Jesus Christ as the highest expression of God's immanent, moral working in history (modernism), the revelation of the dialectical relation between time and eternity (neo-orthodxy), or the ontological Son of God in human flesh (orthodoxy), the proposition remains unalterably true. However high or low our view of the person of Christ may be, all Christians unite in the joint conviction that there is no other solvent for the predicament of our times than Jesus Christ. The further we retreat from Christ, the more we betray those dignities and vitalities which define our essential moral nature.

Since a successful delineation of Christ is directly conditioned to the clarity of the text which speaks of him, however, it follows that all who profess the name of Christ should joyfully cooperate in the employment of that version of Holy Scripture which presents salvation in the least ambiguous terms. To *prefer* an unclear text is tantamount to preferring an unclear Christ. If we are earnest in our conviction that Christ is the only hope of the world, surely our faith is dead when it is not balanced by the good works of language clarity. If the tongue of the common man is not employed, how can the common man hear Christ gladly? We do not pray or preach in the language of the King James Version; we do not conduct our daily business in 17th century speech forms. How, then, can we justify an easy employment of an archaic text when we read the gospel to a lost and dying world? What advancement in piety does ambiguity promote? What spiritual expectations may we ground in a provincialism?

A Serious Choice

There immediately surge up a legion of inconveniences which attend a serious shift from King James to the Revised Standard Version—inconveniences which appeal congenially to our inward preference for the course of least resistance; but is any labor for Christ vain? If the enemies of the cross are solicitous to employ every strategy in bringing men into their own ranks, shall the Christian church be characterized by a weaker vigilance? Shall it once again be said that the children of this age are wiser in their own generation than the children of light? It may take the courage of a reformer to defend the virtues of the latest text of Scripture, but one must not overlook the dimensions of his cause. The Christian holds the key to life.

A man may personally elect to continue promoting the cause of King James, but he ought at least to be briefed on the implications of his decision, for his choice is far from innocent. Not only does he tend to provincialize Jesus Christ, but in effect he is casting his vote on the side of cultural stagnation. The issue is not this version or that, but the problem of the broader values of progress, freedom, and human creativity. It may seem slight to nurture churchy traditions which are an offense to the progressive world outside, but compounded with modern man's rejection of the *source* of gospel preaching is his rejection of the very Christ being preached.

The Pulpit for May, 1951. Volume XXII, Number 5. Published monthly by the Christian Century Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Telephone HArrison 7-5380. Price this issue: 30 cents; $3 a year in U. S. A. and Canada. Foreign $3.25. Copyrighted 1951 by Christian Century Foundation. Entered as second-class matter May 14, 1942 in Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Accepting Responsibility for Life

By K. Morgan Edwards

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke 9:23.

"OF all animals," writes William Ernest Hocking, "it is man in whom heredity counts for least, and conscious building forces for most. Consider that his infancy is longest, his instincts least fixed, his brain most unfinished at birth, his powers of habit-making and habit-changing most marked, his susceptibility to social impressions keenest—and it becomes clear that in every way nature, as a prescriptive power, has provided in him for her own displacement. . . . Other creatures nature could largely finish; the human creature must finish himself."

Of one thing man soon becomes certain: he has himself on his hands. That self is buffeted by circumstance and harrassed by heredity. From the first conscious evaluation of his assets man realizes his impotence as he faces life's unfinished business. Matching life with limited resources constitutes man's most serious problem. On the inside of man, frustration, disintegration, inhibitions and unhappiness are at work. On the outside, wars, economic circumstances, catastrophes which respect no man, cruel social inequities or the liability of inherited prosperity complicate man's lot. Man, the creature least prepared by nature, has forced upon him complicated demands made upon no other being in the whole creation.

The words "responsible" and "responsibility" do not appear in the King James version of the Bible. Yet Jesus spent much of his time attempting to have man accept responsibility for life. When Jesus was rebuked by Peter for insisting that assuming responsibility for his own life would lead inevitably to the cross, Christ responded with the injunction, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." When the rich young ruler boasted perfect observance of the law Jesus pressed him further, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me."

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On one occasion when the disciples found him alone praying, he asked, "Who say the people that I am?" Then, with increased anxiety, "Who say ye that I am?" After Peter's answer he explained again that "the son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected . . . and slain." Then, to drive it home unmistakably, Christ faced them with their responsibility: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Nothing is clearer in the New Testament than that Jesus believed that every man is responsible for what he makes of his own life.

It is interesting—and appalling—to note that the current book in the field of psychology and religion which is likely to be read by more laymen than any other, although it is written by a well known clergyman, has no chapter on the acceptance of responsibility for life and not a single illustration on accepting life in the spirit of this self-dedication of the cross. Yet Jesus established as a basic principle of discipleship that man is responsible for what comes of his life.

Refusal to Accept Responsibility

There are many devices which man uses to evade responsibility. One of them is pretense. Behind every man's conventional attitude are his genuine feelings. In *The Great God Brown,* through the use of the mask, Eugene O'Neill skillfully represents the frequent contradiction between a man's actions and his unspoken thoughts. Dion Anthony wears the external mask of indulgence (Dionysius) covering the inner man of restraint (St. Anthony). The Great God Brown is the successful, college-bred American businessman. When his rival drinks himself to death Billy Brown puts on the mask of Dion Anthony and takes his place in the Anthony home. He believes he has gained revenge on the girl who spurned him for the worthless Anthony. He is unable to see that he really never has been in love with Marguerite Anthony but desired her only because Dion had won her, and this double life slowly destroys his soul. Unwilling to face life honestly, he comes to the unpardonable sin of all hypocritical action: he is unable to distinguish between good and evil or desire and loathing. Pretense, so far from aiding one to escape responsibility for life, makes living more complex. Woe to the double-minded, for here and now they experience the fires of hell.

When a man seeks to be dominated by one central and worthy motivation for living, he discovers how complex life is. All of us hide behind masks. Each of us tends to live at least two roles in life. Seldom is the life which we live with our

fellows the life of our solitariness. Life pulls and pushes us in all directions.

> Within my earthly temple there's a crowd:
> There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud;
> There's one that's brokenhearted for his sins,
> And one that, unrepentant, sits and grins;
> There's one that loves his brother as himself,
> And one that thinks of naught but power and pelf.
> From much disturbing conflict I'd be free
> If I could once determine which is "me"![1]

How difficult for man is the battle to make dominant in his mind the purpose to "love his brother as himself," that he may overcome the desire to "think of naught but power and pelf"! Everybody knows something of this tug of war that goes on inside. Many of us seek to escape responsibility for life by putting on a mask of something that we are not, pretending to be better than we are, insisting that we are noble in the bearing of life's burdens.

Shifting the Blame

There is another device known to all of us. If we do not like to accept what life seems to have dealt us, we *shift the blame.* That isn't very difficult. The art is not confined to Adam in the garden of Eden who said, "The woman thou gavest me, she . . ." Man can always prove that he is part of a complex social matrix, and it is easy to implicate others in his failure. The little child's failure to play easily with a group is explained as the desire of another to be the boss. Failure to get along in the social group is interpreted as a lack of appreciation for one's true gifts. Breakdown in marriage is written off as the other person's fault.

When we find situations for which others cannot readily be blamed we shift the responsibility to God. So Louis Untermeyer has "Caliban in the Coal Mines" say:

> God, we don't like to complain—
> We know that the mine is no lark—
> But—there's the pools from the rain;
> But—there's the cold and the dark.
>
> God, You don't know what it is—
> You, in Your well lighted sky,
> Watching the meteors whizz;
> Warm, with the sun always by.
>
> God, if You had but the moon
> Stuck in Your cap for a lamp,
> Even You'd tire of it soon,
> Down in the dark and the damp.
>
> Nothing but blackness above,
> And nothing that moves but the cars—
> God, if You wish for our love,
> Fling us a handful of stars![2]

When life puts us in a mold which is difficult, or when we fail to find a responsible sense of mission in our vocation, we tend to blame God for our lot. So common is this practice of shifting the blame that after years on the campus a college president said, "I can never be certain whether B.A. stands for Bachelor of Arts or Builder of Alibis."

Another device to which we resort in refusing to accept responsibility is *self-pity.* If Parkman had dwelt on the state of his health—eyes gone back on him, an overtaxed heart, recurring indigestion and chronic insomnia, joints crippled by arthritis and mental powers frayed by a nervous disorder—one of the greatest writers of our nation would never have written at all. If Pasteur had excused himself for his paralysis, Mozart or Henry M. Stanley for their poverty, Beethoven for his deafness or Milton for his blindness, Paul for his thorn in the flesh or Christ for his birth in a stable, the world would be immeasurably poorer and there would have been no redemptive stream flowing from Calvary. To meditate on how sorry associates will be when one is dismissed from the office or club at forty is simply a continuation of the little child's sense of satisfaction derived from planning his own funeral with the thought, "When I'm dead they'll be sorry they punished me."

Acceptance of Responsibility

We have ourselves on our hands. We may revolt against the hereditary chains which have been forged about us. We may complain bitterly about the prison walls of unfavorable environment which limit our powers. But always there is a third element on which the whole of life turns—our personal response. What heredity and environment do to us is one thing, but what we make of what they do to us is the determinative matter.

Fatalism is commonly represented as that doctrine which reduces us to mechanical robots, destroying our freedom. So it does. But there is an even more serious result. How many men and women have so magnified their infirmities that they refused to develop life's remaining gifts. How many men and women have justified their unworthy conduct or their failure by insisting that Adam's fall is the fountainhead of the evil in them over which they have no control. An alibi persistently held is the last stronghold of those who blame fate for their lot. So Omar Khayyam insisted that we are

> . . . helpless pieces of the game he plays
> Upon the checkerboard of nights and days.

But if this be a moral universe the free are the responsible. When all that can be said has been said about the cruel forces of unthinking heredity and uncaring environment, still we are responsible for what we make of what has happened to us.

But how? Granted that man must assume responsibility for his life, how can we achieve acceptance and integrate our powers to go on from where life seems to leave us?

Jesus was clear that a man could not take himself in hand unless he found a dominant purpose around which to resolve the conflicts, dissolve the

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[1] Edward Sandford Martin, "Mixed," in *Cousin Anthony and I* (Scribner's, 1895).

[2] From *Challenge* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1914). Used by permission.

tensions and integrate the resources of life. This all-commanding purpose Jesus declared the prerequisite of discipleship: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Yet it cannot be said that man has accepted responsibility for life when he has found a central, integrating, magnificent obsession. Ruthless, exploiting financial tycoons like John Jacob Astor have a dominant purpose. Alexander the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolph Hitler had ruling passions. The tremendous drives of every prominent leader have found unity in some dominant purpose. Jesus stated quite clearly that the purpose must be that of daily cross-bearing under the world's burden, guided by his spirit and trusting in his redemptive way.

Edgar Sheffield Brightman of Boston University school of theology writes: "Everybody wants something. The practical man is the man who knows how to get what he wants. The philosopher is the man who knows what he ought to want. The ideal man is the man who knows how to get what he ought to want." Jesus' prescription involves finding a dominant purpose with moral discrimination which keeps that purpose in the framework of the will of God. If we would unscramble jumbled lives we must find great ends which have socially useful outcomes for God and his children everywhere.

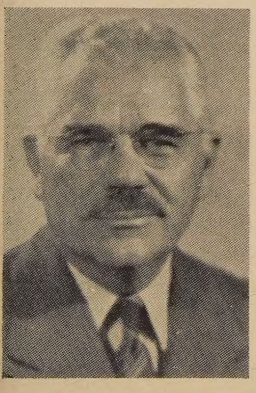
The free are the responsible. But freedom brings with it alternative choices. To use our possessions for our own comfort or as a trust from God; to use our physical strength to erect shelter for ourselves from life's stormy blast or to carry the load of one maimed in life's journey; to use the capacity of love for selfish gratification or for the enlargement of personality within the family circle—these choices face all of us. Man is confronted with the obligation, while shaping his outer world, deliberately to shape himself. The God-given power of choice must be exercised in the light of long-range goals and lasting values. So Christ promises man as he seeks to choose among life's myriad choices: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Outreach of Our Faith

By Hugh C. Stuntz

. . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Philippians 2:10-11.

THE outreach of our faith is unlimited either by time or space. The aim of the gospel is to reach and transform the lives of all men everywhere, now and forever. Consequently our participation in the spread of the gospel will not end until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.



Robert Browning, in the poem "Andrea del Sarto," gives us the picture of a very skillful artist who could paint very much better than many famous artists, but somehow his pictures lacked the spark of genius that would have made them great. They were mechanically perfect, but dull. And in his soliloquy of self-examination he makes this most significant statement:

> Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or what's a heaven for?

Apply that to the work of Christianity and ask, "Does the reach of the gospel exceed its grasp?"

We have reached the geographical ends of the earth with the gospel of Christ. In every part of the world there are Christian witnesses. In many parts there are vigorous indigenous churches enrolling millions of disciples of Christ, and the total Christian population of the world numbers more than 650 million.

Since 1925 the number of Protestant Christians increased under the work of foreign missions from 6,500,000 to 25,300,000, extending into 120 countries and island groups with 141,169 churches and a missionary personnel of 192,987. Greatest gains were made in South Africa, which moved from 740,000 to 5,467,000; and in India and Pakistan, from 580,000 to 4,650,000. Brazil shows a gain of from 70,000 to 1,657,000. Korea, China and Indonesia show comparable gains for the same period.

That is in our day, in spite of the aftermath of World War I, the great economic depression which reduced all Protestant missionary work by nearly half; in spite of World War II, which extended into nearly every mission area; in spite of the more recent cold war in Europe and the Red advance in Asia.

Yet our growing Christian membership around

Whitsuntide is the season when the unique nature, structure and mission of the church are emphasized. In this sermon HUGH C. STUNTZ, for many years an outstanding missionary to Chile, Argentina and Bolivia and now president of Scarritt College, stresses the significance of the church's mission in non-Christian lands.

the world, numbering more than 650 million of the world's 2 billion people, has been unable to stem the tides of war or to redeem vast multitudes from ignorance, poverty, disease and fear. We share responsibility for their condition. As Christians we cannot shirk that obligation. Our record indicates what can be done with little. But what marvelous changes might be wrought if we would take Christ seriously, serve him wholeheartedly!

Into Non-Christian Societies

My parents were missionaries in India. A Hindu practice, thousands of years old, permitted and in fact abetted child marriage, which often resulted in terrible suffering and tended to lower the physical stamina of the race. The British, with several Indian legislators, decided that that practice should end. They met to vote on the question. Outside a mob of more than a quarter of a million howled their hatred and threats. Inside the chamber the viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, imperturbable but utterly determined, put the question, and in a moment of time the age of marriage for girls in all India was raised from nothing to twelve years. The men who voted such a measure were not Christian missionaries. It would have been much easier not to insist that that particular institution of Hinduism should be abolished. Yet they ran the personal and national risks. Why? Because they had been *reached* by the principle basic in Christianity that the human spirit is of infinite value, and they stood immovable for that principle as it applied to the lives of little girls. The reach of the gospel exceeds its grasp!

That was sixty-five years ago. Have there been evidences of further advance?

Ancient Customs Changed

From time immemorial the lot of the widow in India has been shameful. Early in the 19th century under British rule the practice of suttee was prohibited. Under that ancient custom a widow was expected to cast her living body into the flames that consumed the dead body of her husband. When that form of suicide was prohibited, the widow became the servant in the house of her father-in-law—practically a chattel slave, not permitted to remarry or to get an education or to earn her own livelihood apart from the father-in-law's household. There are millions of widows in India, sometimes mere children, and in the past they were doomed to hopelessness.

Christians preached against that practice, but it was part of Hinduism and of custom. Now the parliament of free India, by law, has forever abolished all limitations against widows, has emancipated them. A government predominantly Hindu is changing Hindu customs in favor of persons.

The same legislature has abolished the discrimination heretofore practiced against the outcaste. There are no more outcastes in India under the law. For thousands of years a large segment of Indian society has suffered under the most degrading segregation and discrimination. But the gospel has illuminated the minds and warmed the hearts of men and is doing the work of the Master —uplifting the downtrodden, setting at liberty those that are bruised. Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu, but he was tremendously influenced by the life of Christ. He became such a liberal in regard to Hindu law that the fundamentalists of his faith finally killed him. But the effects of that martyrdom have been almost entirely favorable to liberal developments. His death not only brought peace between Pakistan and India; it brought change into the pattern of Indian life.

Again I repeat: The reach of our faith is far beyond our grasp.

That same outreach has pushed into Buddhist and Confucianist lands and, by affirming the value of life and demonstrating a way of life that is joyful and abundant, our faith has established indigenous fellowships of outstanding vigor.

Women Helped

We know that it was through Christian influence that education and opportunity came to women in China, long before a revolution overthrew the ancient Manchu empire of oppression. It was through Christian influence that modern medicine was introduced into China. It was through Christian agencies that INDUSCO got started, and it is Christian pastors and laymen that have been the ablest agents of the Red Cross and other relief organizations, according to the testimony of field supervisors. Into the life of a practical people absorbed in the struggle for existence our faith has come to bring hope and to witness to its power of transforming, redeeming love.

From Japan a letter came the other day referring to two rather significant events. A Buddhist monk came to the Protestant pastor of a certain town and asked that all of his Buddhist group be baptized as Christians, since they had lost faith in the power of idols and wished to know the living Christ. The same kind of experience has been reported by the Catholic press as having occurred in a large city with thousands of people who sought entrance to the Roman Catholic Church.

Disillusioned by a fearful lesson of military destruction and defeat, the people of Japan are seeking some certainty that will last. From being a religion of negation which declares all life to be evil, Buddhism is becoming, under the prompting of the people, a religion that declares the value of life. Where before only monks and nuns could find the peace of Buddha, there is a growing laymen's movement within Buddhism.

The outreach of our faith into non-Christian societies is marvelous. At the same time it is dangerous, for it can too easily become a secularized caricature of Christianity; we must extend its *grasp.*

Offering a goal that transcends the physical and material "thingification" of life, our faith meets the harsh and brutal realities of social and economic life with hope, with love, with faith in a God of love and righteousness, a personal God whose will is our peace. That is its great contribution. And the response of more and more scien-

tists, agnostics, skeptics and atheists illustrates the attractive power of the Spirit of Christ.

Into the Secular World

Today many of us are placing reliance upon the United Nations agencies to transform the world into a brotherhood of educated, healthy, economically self-supporting people with a rising standard of living. But no secular agency, however well intentioned, can redeem men from sin, and it is sin as well as ignorance that binds humanity with chains. That is our assignment, our inescapable duty. We can provide the highest educational facilities in the world to every man in the world and still have a world at war, unless that education is guided by Christian principles for the purpose of forming Christlike character. So internationally our missionary responsibility—to push the grasp of Christ farther out along his reach—remains a major challenge to our church and to the youth of our land.

Wherever men speak of unity, our faith is speaking, for our mission is to love one another, to make all one in Christ. At Amsterdam in August 1949 the vast majority of non-Roman churches gathered to launch a World Council of Churches as the culminating act of faith toward which, during and in spite of World War II, the Spirit of Christ was leading. It served as one supra-national agency which succeeded in keeping contacts of fellowship across the barriers raised by war. Such unity symbolized in a world council is more significant that we can now realize. But we do know that it is on the levels of spiritual and moral life that human brotherhood can, alone, be achieved, and we have placed this cornerstone of our faith toward the erection of such a world.

The long schism that has engendered such bitterness and antagonism between groups who name the same Lord is being healed, thank God. Our faith is reaching down into the areas of church life where for centuries there have been misunderstanding and suspicion to draw again the allegiance of men to a more transcendent goal.

Outreach toward Communism

Does our faith have any chance in the struggle with communism? In China, Indonesia, Poland, Russia? Is it realistic to believe that Christianity can win out against such a ruthless foe? Look back at our beginnings for a minute and see what Christianity has already survived before you answer that question.

Communism masquerades in some of the garments of Christianity. It deceives many an honest person. It publishes aims that are noble: "To establish a worldwide brotherhood of justice, liberty, security, happiness for all men equally. A world in which there shall be no more injustice, selfishness or desire for power over others." We have no serious quarrel with such goals; on paper they are splendid. But when we come to study the means used by Communists to attain these goals we find that they have swallowed whole the cosmic lie that the end justifies the means. Denying God, they find no difficulty in employing the ways of villainy to serve the ends of nobility. According to such mad logic, deceit is good, brutality is right, injustice is necessary, oppression is wise, persecution is useful, intolerance, hatred, cruelty, murder, all the *Schrecklichkeit* of the nazis, and worse, are justifiable. And with an unbelievable naiveté they expect noble ends to be achieved by dastardly means —if they are sincere.

Our outreach into communism is already great. A chief goal of Jesus was human brotherhood, the elimination of discrimination and segregation, the healing of the brokenhearted, the releasing of the oppressed. Communists are trying to lead mankind away from God toward self-sufficiency, all in the name of humanity. It is a terrible distortion of Christianity. But Christians need to recognize their responsibility for such a masquerade. We move too slowly toward the emancipation of the human spirit.

It is not difficult to add up the sums of Christian advance, make a table of statistics that shows a remarkable development. But it is not so easy to apply the same measuring rod to ourselves. Do we let God reach us? Really apprehend us? Does he take hold of me and make me the willing instrument of his redeeming purpose?

'As Thyself'

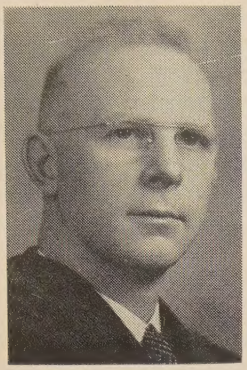
That is what Jesus means when he adds the words to that Great Commandment, "as thyself"— "Thou shalt love the Lord, and thy neighbor, as thyself." The way you love self is going to be the criterion by which you will love others, and in the long run it will determine your view of God.

Jesus loved himself on so high a plane that he merged his self with God. He had that high a regard for self. "I and the Father are one." Nothing could be higher. Too many of us become satisfied with mediocre selves. We refuse to permit God to do more than *reach* us with the whisper of his Spirit. But the outreach of our faith cannot be vital, cannot be transformed into the grasp of faith, unless our individual lives have been transformed and kept in close relationship with the Spirit of Christ.

So as we close our meditation may we bring our minds back to ourselves, ask how far God really is admitted into the place where we make decisions and carry on the business of our lives. We are the instruments to which God limits himself in the building of his new world. May we be vital, devoted, consecrated servants in his hands for his need.

Any nation that looks for power from the Pentagon instead of the Pentateuch has already taken the road that leads to catastrophe.—*James B. Douglas, Broad Street Methodist, Portsmouth, Va.*

We do not believe in immortality because we can prove it; we try to prove it because we cannot help believing it.—*James Martineau.*



By Fred Hoskins

An unusually able installation address by an outstanding Congregational pastor

Assumptions

MR. MODERATOR, I beg leave to depart somewhat from the form familiar in such a council as this, and instead of undertaking an orderly and detailed statement of my credo rather to indicate some of the assumptions upon which I begin the ministry of this great church.

Of course, one's assumptions constitute one's faith. They are crammed with theology. They are the beliefs upon which one bets one's life. To use an assumption is to take a chance. When one strikes out on an assumption one is ever in jeopardy of coming upon tragedy. Mary upon the assumption that she was talking only to the gardener outside the tomb came near tragedy, for if she had not been disabused of her supposition she would have missed the greatest thing in the world —the resurrected Christ.

Agassiz in *Geographical Sketches* wrote: "Nothing is more injurious in science than assumptions which do not rest on a broad basis of fact." You can say that about religion too. Certainly you can say that about the relationship between a Christian minister and his people. I recognize therefore that if there be no broad basis of fact beneath my assumptions, this pastorate will certainly be disastrous.

Fellowship of Saints

I assume that the people to whom I here become minister will be responsive to my faith that they are Christian saints. They would be very much surprised to hear me suggest this. I nonetheless am assuming they are Christian saints in the sense in which this word is used in the New Testament. There are described the only kinds of saints I expect to find in Oak Park. When Paul wrote to the saints of Philippi and other places, he commended them for prayers, good intentions, for their collections and their concern for him. He complimented them for their good works, but he scolded them for their bickering and selfishness, for their conceit, for their sins of the flesh and for their failures to understand. If anyone should have been a saint, it would have been a disciple of Jesus. But Peter was impetuous and unstable, John was immature, and Judas could not see the point and finally apostatized.

Saints were not bundles of piousness. They were regular red-blooded people with the hopes, fears, temptations and failures of all others. They were like ourselves. But they believed in God. They were loyal to Jesus. They were earnest in their commitment to his service. They looked forward to the complete rule of God in the world and down deep in their hearts they desired him to be sovereign in their lives.

God Is Sovereign

I am assuming that the members of this church are spiritually congenial to my faith that God is the sovereign of this universe and that he is to be worshiped as such. It is not that they all do or will believe the same things about him or that their experience of him is or will be identical. It is not that they know all there is to be known about him. Rather I am assuming that this church is seeking to know God as the one true sovereign who respects our integrity by relating himself to us through laws, and who can and does break through here and there, now and again, into our corporate life and into our individual lives in extraordinary manner; that he is one with whom we can communicate through prayer and be confident of a response.

Christ Is Lord

I assume that this people will respond to my faith that Christ is Lord. Oh, I know their Christology is not uniform. Mine has changed and does change with new experience. They may be very greatly perplexed about what they do believe concerning the Trinity. But this I know—they have their best view of God in Christ. They must know that God is at least as loving as Jesus, at least as thoughtful, at least as wise, at least as considerate, at least as adventurous. That in itself would be excellence compared with anything they otherwise could know. Christ throws light on their paths; to follow his example and precepts brings their

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FRED HOSKINS is pastor of First Congregational, Oak Park, Ill. The editor of The Pulpit was present when Dr. Hoskins was recently installed as pastor of that congregation and asked permission to publish this statement, made at that time. It will be helpful to others in similar situations. Dr. Hoskins has served as pastor of churches in Connecticut and Iowa before being called to Oak Park. In 1946 he received the Award of Merit from the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He is co-editor of A Book of Worship for Free Churches.

lives to a new and a higher quality. My faith in the uniqueness of Jesus, in his sole lordship, makes room for their freedom to question, to doubt, to search and to revise.

I shall assume that this people will be sympathetic to my faith in the efficacy of the sacraments. I suppose, though, that they are not sacramentarians—that is, not believers that the bread and the wine of the holy communion and the water of baptism, if used with particular words and in designated manner, will of themselves produce a good result. My faith is strong that the materials of the sacraments, set apart for sacred use, become channels through which the grace of God enters into men's hearts with special force. I have faith—knowledge that experience in fellowship, human and divine, is made more significant by the observance and the celebration of the sacraments. Therefore my ministry must proceed upon the assumption that the church will be sympathetic to my conviction that the Lord's Supper is the only distinctive feature in Christian worship, as distinguished from Judaism, and must be moved more and more back toward the center of worship.

Faith in Immortality

I undertake this ministry upon the assumption that the people share my faith in immortality. I could be a missionary to people who disbelieve in immortality, but I could not be their minister. For immortality is a part of the warp and woof of a belief in a sovereign, loving, acting God. Immortality is the vital essence of the church. If there be no immortality, then was Christ not raised from the dead and the church is founded not on him but on a hoax? If there be no immortality, then I see no relief for today's children of despair, the world is meaningless, God is not in control or, if he is, he is vicious. To be sure, there must in my congregation be very great diversity about the nature of immortality, but as Christians they surely believe in the indestructibility of good, in the supreme value of personality, that "as God lives, what is good is permanent." Whatever form the preservation of that good will display, I trust this people will share with me in an attitude of hopeful waiting and courageous faith.

Faith in the Church

I assume that as Christians the members of First Congregational Church believe with me that something must needs be done about one's religion, that in fact one cannot be a Christian in a vacuum. One's lifelong task is to strive after a consistency between what one believes and what one does. To be a Christian brings one under the influence of a Spirit who seeks to keep taut the line between where we are and where we ought to be. I shall proceed upon the assumption that as Christians we have a continuing job of making fit and keeping fit this earthly kingdom for the rule of our Lord. Whatever thwarts his rule we properly attack with all our strength and skill, be that political sin, race inequality or personal vice. Whatever promotes his reign, behind that we put not only our prayers but our very lives, even if that be church unity.

This leads me to say that I assume that this congregation is sympathetic to my faith in the church. It has an earthly body but its life is divinely fed. It is made up of all those now living and all those who have lived, who accept Christ as their Lord and as their Leader. These find in him a revelation of God and a salvation from their sins and a light for all their earthly life. The similarities between the churches we know and nations and clubs are strictly coincidental and for the most part sin. The church of Christ essentially is one and no segment of it as now constituted is actually the true church, but only a group aspiring to be the body which expresses appropriately and effectively the will and the spirit of Christ in the earth.

I assume that the members of First Congregational Church of Oak Park are ready to accept my faith in Protestantism. To be sure, Protestantism began in protest. It was a protest against corruptions in the Roman Catholic Church and against the very theory of the church. But we never understand Protestantism if we imagine it is a body of people who are everlastingly objecting to something. To be a Protestant means not so much being against something as it means witnessing in behalf of something. It means witnessing for the universal priesthood of believers, the continual holding-up of the responsibility of the individual to God—his responsibility both for himself and for his brother. It means witnessing for the authority and primacy of the Bible, not just in words but in knowledge and in faith and in action. Protestantism means witnessing for the inseparability of faith and works. It means witnessing for the lordship of the living Christ in all the world of a man's life, personal, social and geographic. I am assuming that I have come to be a minister of Protestants.

Support of Denomination

Furthermore, I am proceeding upon the assumption that I am a minister of Congregational Christians. That all the members of this church were not brought up in Congregationalism, I am confident; possibly half or more of them were not. But now that they are in this household of faith, I am assuming that they are real Congregationalists. And what does that mean? About that there is debate. Certainly there are two foci. The first focus is local autonomy. The church is gathered on a covenant basis. The Christian faith is the foundation which is agreed upon and those who share the basic convictions are invited to join. The second focus is cooperation, fraternity with other churches. We democratically select representatives to constitute agencies through which we act as a body of Christians. In freedom for a particular church to follow its own course we traditionally have acknowledged the power and authority of representative bodies to act according to the will of the majority, as witness this council or the Chicago Congregational association. There is, to

be sure, freedom to believe according to one's God-guided conscience. There are on the other hand statements of faith, there are creeds to be learned and to be said. Never are they employed as tests for fellowship, however. There is room for differences, but not room for divisiveness.

Loyal to Local Church

A basic assumption of this ministry is that the people are loyal to First Congregational Church. We are Christians first, we are Protestants next, we are Congregational Christians after that. But we have to begin as loyal members of this church. I am assuming that this is where we take hold. This is the family of which together we are members. There is no infidelity in being loyal First Church members for all that we are Congregationalists and Protestants and universal Christians, for it is impossible to be good and effective First Church members without being good Congregationalists, without being good Protestants, without being good ecumenical Christians. Or you can say it the other way round. One cannot be a good Christian, an effective Protestant, a convincing Congregational Christian without being fitted for valuable membership in the local church. This is not to cast reflection or aspersion upon any other church of whatever name or sign or creed. It is not provincialism. It is to remember that for this time and in this place we are set in this particular family in Christ.

Responsibility of Members

Therefore, I come on the assumption that the members of this church are responsible for its work, its worship and its service. "To be or not to be" may have been Hamlet's question, but to go to church or not to go to church, to do the work or not to do the work of the church, to pray and to strive for God's Kingdom upon earth or not to work and to pray—these are not the questions of loyal First Church members. Those questions were answered when individuals accepted the covenant of the church, and therefore I assume that any member who carelessly or needlessly absents himself from worship is derelict in his duty, for worship not only is a privilege but a duty. I assume that any member who does not support his church in work and in money according to his ability is delinquent in his duty, that anyone who says "I have done my share, I have already done more than any other," has not yet understood the character of Christian Discipleship. He still thinks of the church as he would of a lodge or a luncheon club or a business.

This ministry is being undertaken upon the assumption that the people are determined that First Church shall continue to stand in the community as a witness to the gospel, as a beacon of light to the perplexed, as a conscience to the sinful, as a friend to the needy, as a refuge to the despairing, as a collaborator with every other part of God's church. I furthermore assume and shall act upon the assumption that this people is determined to loose itself from any shackle of prejudice or bigotry or provincialism or sectarianism, that it may be free to fulfill its divine destiny.

Prayer for Whitsunday

By Paul Hutchinson

Editor, The Christian Century

ETERNAL GOD, on whose will we depend for life, and on whose love we depend for salvation, we give thee thanks for the greatness of thy works manifested in thy church throughout past generations.

As we meet in this worshiping company on this Whitsunday, we think again of that first Pentecost, of the little band gathered in that upper room, of the rushing as of a mighty wind and tongues of fire. And we tell ourselves again that thou canst make the weak strong through the coming of thy Spirit upon men; that thou canst use the humble ones of earth to perform thy mighty purposes. O make us fit to be the instruments of thy working!

We see the long line of apostles and martyrs, of saints and prophets, of servants of the truth and servants of the needy, marching down through the ages until the great procession of the followers of thy Son reaches to our own day and to our own community. O make us worthy to take our places in the ranks of that procession!

We thank thee for the triumphs of thy church, and we thank thee for its testings. Especially do we remember before thee those congregations of thy church which are in lands swept by war or hunger or any other form of dire human misery. Yet remind us, as we pray for them, to pray likewise for the church in our own land, lest in the midst of comfort it become surfeited with possessions and lose the pentecostal passion in material contentment.

O living God, repeat again the miracle of that first Pentecost and pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh! Pour it out upon the ministers and the members of the churches as they worship, and even more as they seek to turn the experiences of their daily lives into acts of worship. Pour it out upon those who bear the responsibilities of government and upon those who wield the power of the press, the screen and the radio. Pour it out upon those who dispense justice, upon those who bear the responsibilities of teaching, upon those who deal with their fellows across the lines of nationality and race and class we have allowed to grow up. Pour it out upon those who must discharge the obligations of stewardship in the administration of wealth, or conduct the operations of industry, or represent the interests of labor.

Pour out thy Spirit, we beseech thee, upon all who minister to the sick or the needy or the broken in spirit. Pour it out upon all who bear burdens of grief. Pour it out upon all in whom the flame of hope is flickering low. Pour out thy Spirit, O compassionate Father, upon us and upon all men. Amen.

Much of today's preaching is concerned with the church's responsibility in the present tense international situation. We have chosen this sermon by RAYMOND E. BALCOMB, minister of the Federated Church, Ashland, Mass., as representative of what is being said about the cold war.

The Rising Temperature of the Cold War

By Raymond E. Balcomb

Watchman, what of the night? Isaiah 21:11.

THE cold war is getting hotter. It has reached white heat in Korea in recent months and may do so in other parts of the world at any time. No one doubts that the most urgent problem of these days is that of dealing effectively with communism. Toward that end I would like to direct our thinking this morning. Now one can scarcely discuss an issue of such proportions as this in public except at the risk of his career. For most of us feel deeply about this matter; our smoldering emotions are easily fanned into an outright blaze. Patriotic passion and prejudice sometimes hinder us from judging soberly. Before we go any farther, then, let me set forth two or three convictions that impel me to speak.

A Militant Faith

First of all, communism is the most militant and dynamic competitor of Christianity in the world today. Although it officially scorns religion, it is itself a faith, a way of life. Nicholas Berdyaev, who ought to know, once said, "The passion of antireligious propaganda and persecution in Soviet Russia is comprehensible [only] if communism is regarded as a religion which aims at replacing Christianity." Communism is a religion of doctrine. Its God—that is, controller of history—is dialectical materialism. It accounts for the presence of evil by ascribing it to the existence of private property. Its savior is Karl Marx, its apostles are Lenin and Stalin. Its holy land is the U.S.S.R., its Kingdom of God is the "classless society." The Communist leader of China, Mao Tse-tung has been quoted as saying, "You can call communism a religion if you like, the religion of serving the people." Communism is a religion in that it makes a total claim on one's life. Party members owe supreme allegiance to the party only and any deviation is summarily dealt with as treason. Communism is of concern to the Christian pulpit as a rival religious faith.

Second, in confronting social issues it is always better even to be wrong than to be silent. It is better to make a mistake than not to speak. For mistakes have a way of calling out the counter-response that corrects them, and in the end promote truth; but silence leaves a matter about where it was. Whenever human welfare is involved, a mistaken analysis and a wrong answer by the Christian pulpit can be explained and modified, if need be; but silence in the presence of injustice can never be excused.

Third, the community has a right to look to the church for constructive comment, for hard and honest thought upon difficult issues. As of old those in Seir cried out, "Watchman, what of the night?" so have you the right to expect your minister to be straining the sight and insight of religion amid the encircling gloom.

There are plenty of arguments against communism. With its worship of a false god it is idolatrous. Its doctrine that its end justifies any means makes it a façade for a ruthless tyranny. "It is a brutal hoax by which millions of confused and hungry people are persuaded or coerced to sign away their freedom in exchange for utopian promises." We do not need to rehearse communism's inadequacies and shortcomings. What we do need to do is to clarify what our strategy should be in confronting it.

'False Dawns'

Bishop McConnell used to tell about some chickens of his. Shortly after he had moved to a suburban community he noticed that his rooster was crowing every morning about two o'clock. (Perhaps his neighbors were noticing it too!) He set out to discover what was causing this strange phenomenon. What he found was this: the headlight of the 2 a.m. interurban car as it rounded a curve shone directly into the chicken coop and the rooster was dazzled into thinking it was the sun rising. It was a false dawn that was causing the strange behavior. And then the bishop would go on to say that it wasn't only roosters that were confused by false dawns. People sometimes see the light of human passions and mistake it for the sun of righteousness. I want to begin our thought by pointing out at least two "false dawns" that befuddle much of our thinking about communism.

The first is the idea that to be anticommunist is somehow enough, and hence to assume that everything and everybody that is anticommunist is thereby good. We see it in government policy when, because Tito defies Stalin, we rush to Tito's

assistance and *Life* heralds him as the hero of central Europe. Tito, however, is as ruthless a dictator in his small way as Stalin is in his big way. Tito proudly insists that he is a communist, but just one not dominated by Moscow. How does that qualify him as a defender of democracy? So also the distinguished Representative Dewey Short pleads that we should recognize Franco in Spain, that we should become international "pals" with what he describes as "the most anticommunist nation" of Europe (*Reader's Digest*, May 1949, p. 88). But to be anticommunist is not enough. Franco is a dictator from the political right rather than the left, that's all. He is as ruthless in the suppression of minorities as Stalin. Freedom of religion and of speech is as circumscribed in Madrid as in Moscow.

Pitfall for Investigators

This seems to be the fallacy that many of our congressional investigators are unaware of. And see the strange byways it has caused them to wander into! Where and how President Marsh of Boston University ever got onto a list of suspects and was seriously retained there would be uproariously funny if it were not so indicative of a fear-psychosis. He's about as Red as Winston Churchill or Herbert Hoover. The fierce anticommunist crusade of the late Committee on Un-American Activities led them to list the Epworth League as a church group being infiltrated by the Communists. It did not lead them to discover that there has been no Epworth League for ten years. And its shallowness is demonstrated even more gravely by its smearing of the Methodist Federation for Social Action (of which I am not a member), the aims, purposes, and recommendations of which it could have read in the Methodist *Discipline*.

Negative Approach Wrong

To be anticommunist is not enough. Hitler was anticommunist and so is the Ku Klux Klan. Perón of Argentina and Franco of Spain are anticommunist, but far from prodemocratic. No one in the world is more strenuously anticommunist than the pope, but that does not make me a convert to Roman Catholicism. I even read some time ago, in the June 1949 *Reader's Digest*, an article that championed Trotsky because he had been run out of Russia by Stalin. Thus does even a revolutionary Bolshevik receive a halo! It's a false dawn that sees democratic allies in all anticommunists.

The other false dawn is the idea that war can be the answer. Even before the Korean outbreak some were talking of a "preventive war"—that is, atomize the Russians before they could start anything. And many, if not most, were resting back on our lead in the hydrogen-bomb race with an altogether false sense of security. Now the prevailing assumption seems to be that all we've got to do is lick the North Korean Reds, which will presumably so frighten the Russians that they'll never step out of line again. And if they do? Well, then, we'll have to lick them too. Here, however, is a fact that such reasoning overlooks completely: Russia and the Russians could conceivably be exterminated, but communism would not die. You can't bomb out and burn out and shoot out ideas. If you could, Christianity would have succumbed to the systematic persecution of the first three centuries of our era. Men of such diverse backgrounds as Norman Thomas the socialist, Eric Johnston, the most persuasive apostle I know of what he calls the "new capitalism," and a group of Protestant laymen and theologians of the National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order agree unanimously on this point. Norman Thomas has written, "The successful answer to communism cannot be war." Eric Johnston has said, "The atomic bomb could never destroy communism, but I think that freedom eventually will." And the Protestant church members concluded that a "preventive war would be folly as well as sin."

War Is No Answer

The reason that war cannot be the answer is twofold. For one thing, war never solves your basic problems; it only aggravates them. As Lincoln pointed out to the south in his First Inaugural: "Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions . . . are again upon you." And so they were; nearly a century has not seen their solution. And second, even if victorious and even if not ourselves obliterated or mutated by atomic radiation, we would have succumbed to the very ideas we thought we were fighting. That is, modern warfare cannot be carried on except by totalitarian means. After each of two devastating wars we have seen less democracy and more dictatorship at home and abroad. A third world war will so augment the power of centralized statism that democracy will no longer be possible. There is a moral gravitation to this universe which inexorably decrees that "they that take the sword shall perish by the sword." War insidiously breeds the very thing you think you are destroying. To see in it a solution to the problem of communism is to be deceived by a false dawn.

Christianity Is Above Systems

Well, let's move on now to see some positive suggestions as to our strategy as Christians in confronting communism.

Our first responsibility is to refuse to identify Christianity with any social or economic system. As Christianity holds up the plumb line of God's will to communism and finds it wanting, so also does it to feudalism, socialism, capitalism, rugged individualism, and all the other isms. Democracy, we may well believe, is superior to autocracy; government "of the people, by the people and for the people" is certainly superior to monarchy or oligarchy; but democracy is not the Kingdom of God. And as Christians we must subject it to the searchlight of God's will and way rigorously. They are strong words, but in the highest Christian

tradition, which David Lamb, a commissioner of the British Salvation Army, is said to have uttered: "I want less economics and more humanity. There are millions of unemployed people suffering from privation. If this is what economics and politics can do, then I say damn them."

The other day one of the men of this church came back from New York. He told me he was tempted to bring back some pictures a New York paper was running of the conditions under which some New Yorkers live: nine people crowded into one room in a cellar, and so forth. I wish he had brought the pictures. We need them to shock our sensibilities awake. A rural teacher once ended a discussion of proper nutrition by earnestly urging the children to drink at least a quart of milk a day. A shocked silence followed, finally broken by one of the older boys. "Why, teacher," he said reprovingly, "we ain't hardly got enough milk for the hogs." Does anyone dare identify Christianity with that? Our first task is not to be so concerned with political "lefts" and "rights" that we forget the moral rights and wrongs, the Christian above and below.

Friendship Continually Offered

Second, I believe our strategy as Christians should be to insist that our government hold out the hand of friendship continually to the Russian people. Fighting—and even winning—in Korea or any place else can be no more than a "holding action" pursued in the hope that it will give us time to win the friendship of the Russian people. It is the task of American diplomacy so to phrase the issues of the present difficulties, so to put our desire for peace, so to hold up the blessings of freedom that even the Russian peasant and the Moscow man in the street will be convinced that we have no desire to rule the world and that it is to his own advantage that tyranny should perish.

That, it is admitted at once, is a large order. But Lincoln accomplished it in his time—Robert E. Lee said that Lincoln's ability to appeal to the common man was worth many a division to the north. Wilson accomplished it in his time; the Kaiser's imperial Germany crumbled from within, you will recall. Are you thinking of Mr. Churchill's "iron curtain"? Former Secretary of State James Byrnes, who has been behind the curtain, has remarked, "There is no iron curtain that the aggregate sentiments of mankind cannot penetrate." Let us spend a tithe of what we are spending on atom bombs for an improved and expanded "Voice of America," and we'll begin to make some headway on the real problem rather than the surface disturbances. We have been accused of being a nation of salesmen; well, it is now our task to sell ourselves to the Russians and the rest of the world as well. Long before becoming President, Woodrow Wilson was a historian. And one of the lessons he learned in humanity's great school was from the work of Alexander Hamilton. As he once phrased it, "nobody could defeat Alexander Hamilton, whether he was in office or not, because he alone had the constructive program; and they either had to submit to chaos, or follow Hamilton." Our task as Christians is to insist that our government possess and pursue a constructive program of world friendship even now while the fighting is still in progress. I do not mean appeasement—we ought not to seat Communist China in the U.N. in return for peace. That issue should be judged on its own merits of course. But we ought to be convincing the world—and especially the Russian people—that we want to be good neighbors.

Concern for Human Welfare

Finally, the keystone of our arch of triumph over communism is to give effective expression to our concern for human welfare. The final test of Christianity, says the Master, is the cup of cold water, the alleviation of hunger, the face-to-face ministry to the sick and the prisoner. His standard is ever one: human welfare. Corn on the Sabbath? Yes, if men are hungry. Healing on the Sabbath? Yes, if men are ill.

Why do you suppose he did that? Because it is a law of the universe that the higher always rests on the lower. You don't build a house from the roof down, but from the foundation up. So also in life: you don't build spiritual life from the top, you begin at the bottom. The lower levels of life are the physical ones; only upon these can the higher levels, the spiritual ones, be durably set. His Kingdom cannot be realized when we permit human suffering to go unalleviated.

Sacrifice Needed

Kermit Eby tells of being in Paris at a UNESCO meeting at Thanksgiving time in 1947. He was invited to the American ambassador's home. Before the meal giant cocktails were served with great piles of sandwiches lest, as he remarks, the guests should "starve before the main meal was served." The meal itself shrank into insignificance the meals of the Pennsylvania Dutch. There was turkey, ham, roast beef; a different wine was served with each. Vegetables and salads were interspersed between the meat courses. Champagne flowed freely. Dessert and coffee were followed by fruit. Mr. Eby became a little disgusted with the lavishness of it all and thought to himself, "If the communists liquidate us it will be only right." Later he also received an invitation from the Communist-controlled C.G.T.—the French Federation of Labor. If anything, he says, these newly elite were worse. The food was stacked higher and the wine flowed in even greater abundance among those who were supposed to be dedicated to the uplifting of the proletariat. In between the two banquets he visited some schools with a Quaker relief worker. He noticed that the children's lunch "consisted of cold boiled potatoes, if they were lucky." When we Christians sacrifice more of our luxury—limited though it may seem to us—for the homeless and the hungry of our own and every land, then corruptible communism will be no problem.

This is the first in a series of four sermons on the general subject "The Psychology of Religious Living" preached by GASTON FOOTE, pastor of Grace Methodist, Dayton, Ohio. Dr. Foote is the editor of the recently published volume Communion Meditations *(Abingdon-Cokesbury). Other sermons in the series will be: "Life Is What You Make It" (June), "Formula for Happiness" (July), "Making the Most of It" (August).*

Pull Yourself Together

By Gaston Foote

For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Romans 7:19.

YEARS AGO, when I was a boy and indulged in temper tantrums, as most children occasionally do, my father would say to me, "Pull yourself together." Many of us, having exhausted our patience, having given expression to sharp and critical speech, having indulged in self-pity, or having made cowardly excuses for moral turpitude, have heard the admonition, "Young man, pull yourself together." And now, when most of us are no longer children, we still find that we need someone to take us in hand and say to us in a most emphatic way, "Pull yourself together."

This is an organized age. No matter what your interests are, the chances are that there is a club or group organized to take care of them. But may I suggest that there is still one additional organization needed—a more effective organization of our own personalities. "Pull yourself together."

I

There are three factors that enter into the building of a personality: heredity, environment and response. Obviously we have inherited certain characteristics from an unknown number of unknown ancestors, most of whom were dead before we were born. It is just as obvious that there is nothing we can do to change our inheritance. Likewise, our early environment was determined by choices we did not make. If we could not choose our parents, we could not determine whether our early environment should be among the slums or in a mansion. If we could not choose the color or the nationality of our parents, we could not determine whether our childhood should be spent in South Africa, England or the United States. Without doubt, heredity and environment have much to do with the shaping of our lives.

But we must not stop here. Life consists not simply in what heredity and environment do to us, but in our *response* to them. "Of all the animals," writes Professor W. E. Hocking, "it is man in whom heredity counts for least, and conscious building forces for most. . . . Other creatures, nature could largely finish; the human creature must finish himself." That which really determines a personality is the person's response to what is given in heredity and environment. Lower animals react to stimuli; persons respond to them. Reaction may be mechanical; response is personal. A billiard ball reacts, but persons do more; they respond. This is what we mean by responsibility. We are responsible for our responses. When we respond poorly we are admonished, "Pull yourself together."

Well, this is no easy job. Paul described the process of internal disintegration when he said, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Dwight L. Moody said, "I have more trouble with myself than with any other man I have ever met." Indeed, the major problem of humanity lies here—the problem of managing one's self. Frustrated, disintegrated, unhappy people who cannot match themselves with life and become efficient persons constitute the greatest tragedy in the world. Come war or peace, fortune or misfortune, sickness or health, we still have ourselves on our hands and we must learn to manage ourselves, else we shall be saying with Byron:

> My days are in the yellow leaf;
> The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
> The worm, the canker and the grief
> Are mine alone!

How shall we pull ourselves together? May I suggest three steps in the process; namely, blame yourself, discipline yourself, dedicate yourself.

II

We have said we are not responsible for heredity and for much of our environment. But if building a personality involves a third factor, that of response—we are responsible for *that.* When such acceptance involves self-condemnation, however, almost invariably an alibi comes to the rescue. According to the Bible that ancient habit of "passing the buck" started in the garden of Eden. As soon as disobedience had befallen the first pair, Adam shifted the blame to Eve, saying, "The woman . . . gave me of the tree." Eve replied, "The serpent beguiled me." What a marvelous insight into human nature! We are continually trying to pass the responsibility for our moral turpitude off on someone else. Pull yourself together. Blame yourself!

One of the reasons for the genius of Shakespeare lies in this realm. While the Greek dramatists saw the cause of the downfall of their characters outside the characters themselves, Shakespeare saw within man the cause of his own misfortune.

> The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves that we are underlings.

Hamlet's weakness was in his own reluctant and indecisive soul. Macbeth fell because of his own ambition. Othello became a murderer because of his own insatiable jealousy. Shakespeare was saying through his characters, "If you want to get out of this mess you will have to pull yourself together."

This is the basic law of life itself. The food the lion eats becomes lion. That which the serpent eats becomes serpent. Through the mysterious law of assimilation we learn that it is not the outward nature of the thing devoured so much as the inward nature of that which does the devouring which determines the consequences. Fate dealt a cruel blow to Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron in that both of them were cripples. But Scott refused to blame fate, accepted his lameness, and became a radiant person. Byron lamented his fate to his dying day and became sour, cynical and surly. The difference was in their response to what had been given them.

Dr. Fosdick reminds us that refusal to come to grips with ourselves is illustrated by the order in which the great sciences were developed. Astronomy was first, dealing with the things farthest away. Geology was next, with the story of the earth. Biology was next, with the story of the life on earth that preceded us. Last of all came psychology, the study of ourselves. The last person we want to meet, it seems, is ourselves.

A favorite alibi just now and one that is commonly used is that of fatalistic determinism. We are surrounded by such powerful forces playing upon life that we are not to be held responsible. If we are mean it is because our meanness was "written in the stars" before we were born. If we are saints it is because we could not have been otherwise. Such a process of reasoning makes a person, not a person but "a key on the piano," to use a phrase from Dostoievsky; not a man but a machine. If we were beasts, this argument would be valid. A crocodile can be nothing but a crocodile; a serpent is a serpent still. But by no stretch of the imagination can we assume that irresistible forces made the difference between Judas and Jesus or Göring and Gandhi. The decisive factor was in their own lives.

If we accept the responsibility for our lives when we succeed, we cannot slough off the responsibility when we fail. To assume that Beethoven was condemned to be a musician without the personal response of Beethoven would be unimaginable. To assume that Chopin, writing music in the throes of creative agony, was merely the fated result of genes is to assume the preposterous. By the same token, the assumption that theft, lust and moral debauchery are the result of the pressure of uncontrollable forces is to assume the ridiculous. Man is on the road toward integration and happiness when he shoulders the responsibility of his own life and sees the finger of God pointing to him, as to David in the Old Testament, saying, "Thou art the man."

Have you ever heard the story of the poet and the elusive veiled figure? Everywhere the poet went this cruel creature trailed him. When wealth was at his fingertips the veiled figure snatched it from his reach. When fame was in his grasp the veiled figure turned it to shame. When, on his wedding day, he was to marry a beautiful girl the veiled figure strode down the aisle shouting, "I forbid the bans." The tortured poet savagely seized the veil and, to his horror, saw—himself.

Are we not our own worst enemy? We can never pull ourselves together until we shoulder responsibility for ourselves, until we are willing to take the blame for what we are.

III

A second step we must take if we would pull ourselves together and achieve integrated personalities is self-discipline. When Jesus tells us that "narrow is the gate that leadeth to life" and "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction," he is saying that abundant life must be disciplined, inhibited, confined. Paderewski said, "Before I was master, I was slave." He meant that he disciplined himself to the confining exercise of scale practice before he could express himself at the keyboard.

We resent discipline. We instinctively rebel against restrictions. We want to "do what we want to do when we want to do it." History proves, however, that such unrestricted living leads but to slavery. Giving free rein to bodily impulses leads not to freedom of the body but to slavery to lust. Freedom of the mind to wander at will, leads not to development of the mind but to the slavery of ignorance. Freedom of the spirit is achieved only by a disciplined spirit. An undisciplined body ultimately means no body to discipline; an undisciplined mind finally leads to no mind to discipline; an undisciplined spirit destroys itself.

If we find ourselves going to pieces indulging in sexual promiscuity, living the life of the libertine, we can pull ourselves together only as we take our bodies in hand and, in the words of Paul, "submit our bodies as a living sacrifice." If drink has got the best of us, if we are mastered by the physical craving for alcohol, the only way we can pull ourselves together is through the adoption of the rigid rules of sobriety. Your heredity cannot make you drink; your environment cannot make you drink; the advertisements and the omnipresent taverns cannot make you drink. The only power on earth that can make a drunkard is the power of a surrendered will. The answer is in yourself.

You will say that it is easier said than done. Granted. But it *is* being done. St. Augustine, as a youth, was a libertine. He achieved sainthood through bodily discipline. Demosthenes was a great stutterer, but history knows him as the

greatest orator of his day. Discipline of the body did that for him. Glenn Cunningham was the greatest runner of his day. When he was a boy, however, his limbs were severely burned in a fire. Doctors said he could not walk; but he learned to walk. They said he could not run; but he became the greatest distance runner in his time. He disciplined his body.

Discipline is required if we are to achieve integrated minds that can serve us in such a confusing age. The student who takes himself in hand and applies his energies to his studies, finds when the time for the examination comes that the sages of the ages stand before him to serve him. But if our thinking is superficial, if our libraries dig no deeper than *Life, Look, Pic* and *Click,* our answers to the world's pressing problems will likewise be superficial. Before the scientist can reveal the secret of the cure of a wonder drug he must discipline his mind to hard study. Before the historian can write the answer he must dig for the facts. Before the statesman can show us the way out he must carefully weigh the issues involved—he must pay the price of mental discipline. If we have become victims of mental laziness, if our minds have become flabby, if our concepts are obscure, if we would pull ourselves together, if we would integrate our mental interests, we must submit to the rigorous discipline of the mind. In the words of Seneca, "A good mind is lord of a kingdom."

IV

A final step we must take if we would pull ourselves together is self-dedication. I am impressed that, among the people who seek consultation in straightening out the difficulties in their private lives, the great majority are not motivated by a predominant purpose in life. There is nothing that unifies the straggling forces of life like the surrender to an over-all dominating purpose for living. This is in part what we mean when we talk about salvation—we are saved to be saviors, redeemed to be redeemers. If we lack adequate motives for living, our lives are shallow, superficial, resulting in sheer boredom. Tennyson said,

I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs.

Those who have pulled themselves together, who have integrated their lives, are persons who have dedicated themselves to "one increasing purpose."

Florence Nightingale was tempted to grow up in the lap of luxury and become an innocuous leader of British society. But the suffering soldiers of Crimea laid their heavy hands upon her heart and she dedicated her life to nursing. John Bright was a frustrated, saddened and unhappy person until he became interested in repeal of the unjust tax laws that were oppressing Britain's impoverished. Consecrating himself to such a cause, he bent every energy of his life in its behalf. Gandhi, as a student in Oxford, was a dashing young man not unlike other sons of rich Indian merchants in England. But the cry for help on the part of fifty million "untouchables" in his homeland was too much for him. Henceforth he dared not waste his life in boredom—he belonged to India's poor.

To what great cause shall we dedicate ourselves? For the Christian the answer is plain. We are to dedicate ourselves to the one Person who incarnates within himself the highest human values. That Person is the Son of God. We are courageously to stand for those principles for which he stood. We are to give ourselves to making brotherhood real, to giving abundant life to childhood, to fight human oppression and enslavement on land or sea. We are to climb with him upon the cross and die there, if need be, praying all the while for the maddened murdering mob.

The most amazing thing about Jesus is that he incarnates every admirable human virtue. We stand at attention and salute, or bow our heads in reverence when he passes by. When we commit our all to him, he takes possession of our lives—fills them, inspires them, gives them purpose. When that happens to us—and it will if we but humbly kneel at his feet—then we understand what Paul meant when he said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ . . ." If you pull yourself together at the feet of Christ you will stay together—integrated and motivated by the purposes of almighty God.

It is said that when Leonardo da Vinci was finishing his painting "The Last Supper," a man came to watch him. The artist was painting the bowls and fruit on the table when he turned and saw the watcher observing his every move. With a quick stroke of the brush Leonardo destroyed the images he was painting and, pointing to the central face in the picture, said, "Don't look down there, sir; look at his face."

Nothing will unify your life like the long steady look at the Master's face. Christ alone can pull us together and keep us that way.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

THOMAS C. BARR, Trinity Presbyterian, Nashville, Tenn. "The Cords of Sin." Prov. 5:22 *He shall be holden with the cords of his sin.*

RAYMOND F. HARVEY, Bethesda Baptist, Opelika, Ala. "Sorry, No Mail or Phone Orders Filled." Psalm 34:8—*O taste and see that the Lord is good.*

B. C. TAYLOR, Rayne Memorial Methodist, New Orleans, La. "The High Cost of Survival." Matt. 10:39—*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.*

HERBERT W. HAHN, First Methodist, Lee, Mass. "Recovering Our Spiritual Balance." Ps. 73:2—*As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped.*

BERT WRIGHT, Salem Methodist, Halifax England. "Healing the Hurts of Life." Psalm 34:5—*They looked unto him and their souls were lightened.*

Pulpit Post

Bosley Sermon

SIR: Will you permit me, in all kindness, to outline my reasons for believing that the sermon by Harold A. Bosley in your February issue hardly rates the space and prominence afforded it?

It seems to me that Mr. Bosley used a "declaration" which he found in a magazine, without having thought through its implications before starting his sermon. The idea is a good one and challenging, but Mr. Bosley makes little of the chance it offers him. All in all, it might have been better for Mr. Bosley to use a different title for this particular sermon. "Christ Confined" might have provided a better thread on which to string the beads of this discourse.

However, I think no statement of subject could possibly include all the ideas presented in the sermon. While I have never seen Mr. Bosley and while I judge from his picture that he is quiet, intense and unemotional (in the superficial sense) in his sermon delivery, I imagined, as I read this sermon, the preacher ranting with some vehemence and flailing his arms in all directions. Someone ought to do Mr. Bosley the kindness of tipping him off to the fact that it is not good for a preacher to take out *all* his resentments on his congregation on one Sunday—he should scatter them through the year. Be that as it may, it seems to me that there are far too many good ideas in this sermon, and they are not all suited to the topic.

The illustration of the tunnel, the two ends of which are love of God and love of man, vitiates the leading contention of the sermon—column 1, paragraph 3, "You . . . get . . . religious faith . . . all at once." Note that the preacher himself mentions two persons, one of whom entered at one end of the tunnel and the other of whom entered at the other end. You cannot enter or emerge from both ends of a tunnel at the same time. You can start *either* with love of God *or* love of man, but not many can or do start with both.

In fact, it seems to me that the chief contention of this sermon—that a person may get his faith full-blown (figure is mine), if indeed this sermon has a chief contention, or if this statement was intended to sum up the purpose of the sermon—is psychologically untenable and contrary to experience. Faith, like knowledge, is acquired bit by bit, and in the religious life we go from certainty (or conviction) to certainty, we rise from glory to glory. Even Paul did not jump at one leap into the seventh heaven.

These are only the most obvious reasons for my asking why this sermon received such a high "board rating." Or is there any hidden significance in the omission of any qualifying expression between the "so" and the "impressed" in the editorial comment at the bottom of the first column?

Makawao, Maui, Hawaii. THEODORE E. SCHULZ.

SIR: Not only is it a new Pulpit; it's a new Bosley, too.

Calvary Baptist, Yonkers, N. Y. EVERETT G. WARD.

SIR: The Bosley sermon is worth an entire subscription.

Dundee Methodist, Dundee, Mich. ROBERT J. SEARLS.

SIR: In your February issue, you give the position of honor to a sermon by Harold A. Bosley, and at the bottom of page 4 you recommend it very highly. It is a fine sermon, in my opinion. However, are you not doing a dangerous thing in giving first place to a sermon that has neither a Scripture lesson nor even a text? Yes, Dr. Bosley brings in references to some widely separated parts of the Bible, but I believe he quotes from men more than he does from the Bible. True, the men he quotes are able men, but they are not as inspired as were the biblical writers.

I call your attention to this because I feel that one real danger in Protestant preaching is to drift away from the exposition of the Bible. So much of today's preaching is topical, at times to the exclusion of exposition.

Slab Fork Community, Slab Fork, W. Va. ROBERT J. MCMULLEN, JR.

Revolutionary Editorial

SIR: When you wrote and then dared to publish the editorial "The Church that Christ Deserves," you certainly must have experienced some of the feeling that bolstered Martin Luther's spine when he nailed his famous Ninety-five Theses on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Luther's courage started a revolution and gave birth to a Reformation. I predict that your editorial has already started a revolution among those who insist upon tracing their denominational origin back to Matthew 16:18.

Church of God, Nappanee, Ind. CLARENCE A. MCGILLEN.

Unmistakably Ecumenical

SIR: "A Thought for the Month" in The Pulpit for February emboldens me to bring into the open a church membership proviso which, so far as I know, has slumbered only in the few church constitutions which I have been instrumental in formulating. It is an article which labels a church unmistakably nonsectarian—or ecumenical, to use the positive term.

It is a section in the article on membership governing reception and dismissal by letter, as follows: "Every letter of transfer brought to this church from any non-Congregational church shall be preserved in the clerk's files; and should any member thus received later wish to transfer away on the credential of his previous membership, his original letter shall be returned to him—with a notation added attesting his good standing and the period thereof."

Practically all evangelical churches receive members by letter from other churches *without reindoctrinating them.* Which means that on the "receiving end" all concede that members of other connections, at least now that they are headed our way, are just as good Christians as our own brand. But on the "giving end," when they transfer out, the letter given them is our own official document, declaring them to be just our own, ignoring any previous association. But if they are returning to the original denomination, they naturally would prefer to do so on their original credential—a sort of return ticket. This device places a church as generously on the sending end of the line as on the receiving.

Congregational Church, Binger, Okla. H. H. LINDEMAN.

Pulpit Patter

SIR: Morton S. Enslin's articles clinched my decision to become a subscriber. I consider them trenchant, timely, and altogether to be taken to heart by preachers.

Glenorchy Methodist, Glenorchy, Tasmania. TREVOR M. BYARD.

SIR: When I think that I am the object of the announced mission of The Pulpit, I feel almost embarrassed. I must brace myself for Morton S. Enslin's monthly seizure of shivers. Still, I thought of him gratefully ("Where Do They Get Them?") when I read "Grandpa and the Grindstone"—a hard, hard old boy, that one; Jed, that is.

Washington St. Methodist, Tiffin, Ohio. WILLIAM A. WILLIAMS.

Ministry of Music

SIR: May I express my appreciation for Ernest Emurian's column on church music. And, of course, it is always both edifying and amusing to read Dr. Enslin.

Okemos Community, Okemos, Mich. DAVID S. EVANS.

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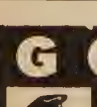

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Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

'As Jesus Said'

AS I walked by a church in downtown Philadelphia my eye was caught by a large sign urging prayers for the dead and ending: "If Jesus Christ had not wished his disciples so to have done, he would have forbidden it." I chanced to mention the sign a few minutes later to another minister with whom I was lunching. He told me of an experience of his as an army chaplain. Upon his arrival at the camp to which he had been attached, it was suggested to him that he and the other camp chaplain cooperate in holding services. He was willing; so was the other—with one proviso: there must be no organ music. When my friend asked why, his new colleague replied: "If the Lord Jesus had wished to have such things as organs used in worship, he would have commanded it."

To the average Protestant minister these two cases may well seem eccentric, even grotesque. But the more I have thought of them, the less able have I been to dismiss them so jauntily. They may be extreme cases; certainly they are crude; but essentially the same thing is to be heard in thousands of pulpits every Sunday morning from preachers who would indignantly deny any resemblance.

How easy it is to support our argument by the sententious word, "As Jesus said," though again and again, if we are honest, we know that Jesus never said anything of the sort. Most preachers may not have been very profound students of the Gospels or of the age which produced them, but those who have had any respectable training do know perfectly well some of the problems involved. They have tools at hand—introductions, reliable commentaries (not of the "pulpit" variety), not to mention their seminary notes. And yet so often when preaching they speak in such a way that no one would ever dream that they know better. In conversation, in clubs where professional papers are read and discussed, they seem reasonably at home in the rudiments of New Testament criticism; seem entirely aware of the fact that the discourses of Jesus in John's Gospel are so fundamentally different from the words he is reported by the Synoptists to have uttered as to make it impossible that they should come from the same man; seem to realize that many of the latter can scarcely be accepted as original and unretouched words of a first-century Palestinian Jew. Yet in the pulpit they utterly ignore all this. It is as if they had never attended a class or read a respectable commentary.

Now it is easy to protest: Even if what you say is true, the practice is entirely legitimate. The pulpit is no place to air doubts or to indulge in critical analysis. It would be absurd and out of place to buttress each quotation with, "As Jesus is reported by Mark or Matthew or John to have said." I am quite ready to agree. But I do insist that in the preparation of the sermon these points should in simple honesty be constantly before the preacher's eye and that his finished product ought to evidence that deliberation. Of course this involves work, but I am still unconvinced that intellectual honesty and readiness for hard work are expendable in sermon production. And my guess is that were preachers to subject themselves to this discipline a bit more rigorously, the quality of their product would show startling improvement

But the point to which I take most exception is the irresponsibility with which a word of Scripture, especially a saying of Jesus, is insinuated or manhandled in, to support or guarantee an argument with which it has absolutely nothing to do. The preacher feels that in a certain circumstance a certain procedure is imperative, a certain word of advice or protest is warranted. Let him give it utterance. That is the task most legitimately his. If in his preparation he is convinced that his contention is actually supported by words from the Bible, of course he may with propriety make use of them; but if he cannot convince himself that this is the case, would it not be simple honesty to refrain from dragging them in?

Not infrequently when studying a passage I have been struck with an idea which seemed to me important and timely. It was not the author's meaning or intent, yet it was from this particular passage that the thought arose. As such I use it, gratefully express my indebtedness—and make perfectly clear that it is my thought, not that of Jesus, John or Paul, as the case may be. That seems to me a legitimate use of the Bible; the careless and irresponsible tagging of our words with the glittering "as Jesus said," when we should know that he never said anything of the sort, is not.

Poets Speak to the Preachers

By Leslie Conrad, Jr.

WE CHERISH what the poets have penned about love and laughter, night and nature, peace and pleasure. But will we want to cherish what some of these same poets have penned about present-day preachers and their preaching? During the past five years several church-attending poets have written rather unkindly of the sermons they have heard. The matter for our concern as preachers is this: Have these poet-critics written out of their imagination? Have they exaggerated? Or have they stated the truth poetically?

It is our opinion that they have very pointedly presented the facts as they stand in many cases. We believe that their observations might serve as a warning signal for present-day preachers and their preaching.

Here are the poetical opinions of three writers of verse, with accompanying considerations of their observations:

THIS SIDE OF CALVIN

The Reverend Dr. Harcourt, folk agree,
Nodding their heads in solid satisfaction,
Is just the man for this community.
Tall, young, urbane, but capable of action,
He pleases where he serves. He marshals out
The younger crowd, lacks trace of clerical unction,
Cheers the Kiwanis and the Eagle Scout,
Is popular at every function.

And in the pulpit eloquently speaks
On divers matters with both wit and clarity:
Art, Education, God, the Early Greeks,
Psychiatry, Saint Paul, true Christian charity,
Vestry repairs that shortly must begin—
All things but Sin. He seldom mentions Sin.[1]

The Rev. Dr. Harcourt pulpiteered quite a ways "this side of Calvin." Kiwanis is less than forty years old, while Boy Scouting celebrated its fortieth birthday this year.

Phillis McGinley has not withheld the facts as she sees them. Note the order of the "divers matters" upon which Dr. Harcourt expounds eloquently. God pulls up in third place behind art and education. St. Paul is in sixth place, while true Christian charity is spared from bringing up the rear, thanks to vestry repairs.

Of the eight subjects, only three—God, St. Paul and true Christian charity—should have prominent places in present-day preaching.

For Calvin the pulpit was the pulpit! Calvin used the pulpit for the purpose for which it was established. His emphasis was on concrete ultimates such as God, faith, Christ and the church. He had no time for penultimates in his preaching.

James S. Stewart, writing in the preface of his book *Heralds of God*, says: "I have chosen the title of this book to stress one fundamental fact, namely, that preaching exists not for the propagating of views, opinions and ideals, but for the proclamation of the mighty acts of God." Will we not have to agree with Phyllis McGinley that the Rev. Dr. Harcourt is not all by himself in the Protestant ministry today? There are many "brethren of the cloth" who are following in his train. They "seldom mention sin."

In the first chapter of the first book of the New Testament, Matthew records the major aim of Christ's advent: "He will save his people from their sins." And in his last session with his disciples before ascending into heaven, Jesus said to them: "Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached . . . to all nations" (Luke 24:47). But the Rev. Dr. Harcourt "seldom mentions sin."

DISTANT VIEW OF A PROVINCIAL TOWN[2]

St. Mary's where the Rector preached
In such a jolly friendly way
On cricket, football, things that reached
The simple life of every day.

The old Great Western Railway shakes,
The old Great Western Railway spins—
The old Great Western Railway makes
Me sorry for my sins![2]

John Betjemen, the writer of this little piece, is an English churchwarden. His hobby—Gothic church architecture—takes him to many churches, where he listens to many sermons. His sermon-listening experiences seem to parallel those of the late Sir William Robertson Nicoll, editor of the *British Weekly*, a religious journal, who visited a large number of the churches in southern England many years ago and wrote of the sermons he heard: "Not one of them would have converted a titmouse!"

Churchwarden Betjeman sees the need for amended preaching. The very fact that he mentions cricket and football indicates that such subjects, though oftentimes used, should be omitted by pulpiteers. What football is to the American, cricket is to the Englishman. But the pulpit is not the place verbally to play or replay either of these sports.

The rector at St. Mary's could very advantageously use some advice of the late Gipsy Smith. When a conference of ministers asked him for sermon subjects, Gipsy Smith said: "I have been scanning the list of announcements of services, and I have only one suggestion to make for a change. Why not preach Jesus Christ?"

Betjeman's eight lines of verse are simon-pure satire. According to Webster, a satire is "a literary composition holding up human abuses or shortcomings of any kind to reprobation by means of ridicule . . . *with an intent to provoke amendment.*" Satirically, Betjeman claims that a "shaking and spinning" railway train preaches repentance, and not only preaches it but does a better job of it than the minister ordained for that purpose. Wouldn't St. Paul and Martin Luther and John Wesley be shocked to the point of death if they were alive to read of the unimportant and unconverting position to which present-day preaching has sunk, according to John Betjeman?

Our next exhibit is by Henry Ervin.

MY PREACHER'S FAULTS

I wish by means, either foul or fair,
My preacher's "barrel" would disappear!
For likely, then, his pulpit food
Would do my soul a little good!

His illustrations, worn and old,
Were used by others who kept the fold.
His mannerisms—octopus style—
Bring to his sheep much inward smile.

His "holy whine" deserves a line,
It's far from being extra fine.
My preacher's full of faults, you see,
May the Lord help him to see like me![3]

Henry Ervin is no ordinary layman. His familiarity with terms such as "barrel" and "holy whine" reveal his inside knowledge of preachers and their preaching. Notice that the first subject of his three stanzas is "bar-

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LESLIE CONRAD, JR., is pastor of Holy Comforter Lutheran, Belmont, N. C. Recently he was appointed executive secretary of the Luther League of America—an organization for the youth of the United Lutheran Church of America.

[1]Phillis McGinley: *Stones from a Glass House*, Copyright 1946. Used by special permission of the publishers, the Viking Press.

[2]John Betjeman: *Slick But Not Streamlined*, Copyright 1947. Used by special permission of the publishers, Doubleday & Co.

[3]Used by special permission of the author.

rel" sermons—old sermons that a preacher has already preached. American pulpits are the sounding stations for many previously preached sermons. We have heard all sorts of estimates on the per cent of "barrel" sermons delivered from American pulpits on the average Sunday. The estimates have ranged anywhere from 20 to 30 per cent. One estimator went as high as 50 per cent.

Now what is wrong with a sermon that has already been preached by the preacher? Nothing, providing the preacher makes it *live* as if it were freshly prepared.

Recently we heard a Japanese pastor touch on the subject of "barrel" sermons. "At one of largest Protestant churches in Japan," he said, "there are associate ministers. Younger minister, forty years old, better preacher. His sermons like fresh fish —takes lot of preparation before eat them. Older minister's sermons like dried fish—takes very little preparation. Older minister uses old sermons. People don't like his preaching."

Another matter to be considered is the preacher's illustrative material. Any layman with average intelligence recognizes an old joke. Why shouldn't his memory be just as good for sermon illustrations? "Illustrations worn and old" show the lack of first-class preparation.

And then there is the preacher's "holy whine." Have you ever noted that the preacher with the "holy whine" has usually been in the ministry for a number of years? He has acquired the whine. He didn't have it when he graduated from the seminary.

If there is one thing in particular that a young person dislikes about a minister it is an artificial voice in the pulpit. The younger generation is accustomed to natural voices in the classroom, over the radio and at the moving picture. They don't like to hear a whine and they don't mind saying so. A recorder—tape, wire or disc—can be used advantageously by any preacher who is prone to employ an unnatural voice in the pulpit.

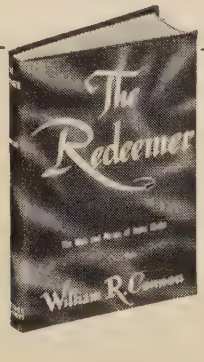
Maybe these poets haven't been too far off the beam if an anonymous preacher-poet is able to confess:

Said one to me, "You ministers don't preach the gospel right;
You hem and haw and find excuse for sin in heaven's sight.
Next Sunday preach the real thing, just give it to us straight;
It's truth we want, most reverend sirs, in terms most up to date.

The *big* word in that preacher-poet's confession is *truth.* It was Phillips Brooks who defined preaching as the verbal expression of "truth through personality." Brooks went back to Jesus for his definition. "If you continue in *my word,*" said Jesus, "you are my disciples, and you will know *the truth,* and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32). Real preaching is word-of-God preaching—it always has been and it always will be!

The Gallup Poll has found that 97 per cent of our churchgoing population consider the sermon the most important feature of a worship service. If that is the case, and we have no reason to doubt that it is, then the preacher needs to take special care of what he preaches!

For *EVERY* Pastor



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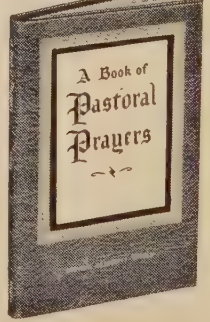

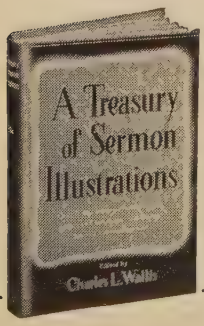

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Ah, if our devotion to the church could match that—having nothing to do with the consequences or with our feelings, but just giving the best we have to give, for the sheer love of it! —*Harry H. Kruener, First Baptist, Granville, Ohio.*

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Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Putting Flesh on Dry Bones*

ONE cannot look at a newsstand without being impressed at the enormous quantities of reading matter which the American public consumes every day. And one cannot listen to the conversation of many of the most avid consumers without marveling that their reading has done them so little good. Their minds eat and eat and remain intellectually starved.

Evidently this fodder is like the grass that grows in Alaska. The growing season is short in this northern land. But great quantities of grass and shrubbery are produced by the shallow top layer of soil, which thaws to a depth of two or three feet. Below that the ground is always frozen. When the summer sun begins to beat on the northern latitudes, the dormant seed leaps to life and covers the earth with green. The sun shines twenty hours a day, so the plants are urged to the limits of their capacity for growth. But their stems are hollow and they have so little nutritive value that hay has to be imported for horses and other livestock.

But there is food which will sustain vigorous life even though it is small in quantity. Recently the papers carried a story about the rescue of a man who had been shipwrecked on a very small uninhabited island in the Indian ocean. He lived for ten months on the island, subsisting entirely on the nuts of almond trees. When he was rescued he was in good health. Which leads us to wonder whether a little more reading of the Bible and of the classics might not do something to put a little more flesh on some of the spiritual skeletons around us.—*Harold E. Fey, Managing Editor, The Christian Century.*

• *Grandpa Was a Preacher*

IN the book *Stars in My Crown,* Grandpa was a preacher. Grandpa always preached about one thing, the Golden Rule. Lon Hamilton, who was the richest man in Walesburg, wanted old Uncle Famous' twenty acres to mine mica. He told the people round about that Uncle Famous was a stubborn old nigger not to sell—that he was keeping them out of jobs and money. So the men burned a cross in front of Uncle Famous' place and told him to get out, or else. The next night Grandpa came and stayed with Uncle Famous. They talked it over long and serious-like and then went to sleep.

Deep in the night the night riders came. There were torches, a rope. Grandpa came out, made a gesture: "I'm not interferin'—came out here tonight because Uncle Famous asked me to come. He knows he's got to die and like everybody else he wanted to get things straightened out with God before he goes." And he slapped papers against his hand. "Here's his will, it's all legal and witnessed. So there can't be any arguments. I would like to read this will right here in front of Uncle Famous. 'I ain't been able to lay much by in my life but the things I have I want to go to my friends. I've got $40 in the Farmer's and Merchant's Bank and I want to leave it to Mr. Dennis Caldwell.' " One white-robed figure squirmed a little. " 'I was there the day he was born and his Daddy took me in to see him all wrinkled and red. I didn't have nothing to give him then but I hopes he takes the $40. My fish pole I leave to Mr. Clem Sheldon. I tried to teach him to cotch sun perch when he was a little boy. He thought I had a magic pole. Maybe now he can catch some fish.' "

So Grandpa went all through the will—one little thing to this man and another to that, until finally—" 'I want all the isinglass and mica on my property to go to Mr. Lon Hamilton. He wants it powerful bad. Now he can have it. There is something else I want to leave Mr. Hamilton; I want to leave him my Bible. I hope he reads it.' "

There wasn't a sound from the men. One man moved and the crowd dissolved. Uncle Famous was saved, and so were many of the men in that white-robed mob, because Grandpa had believed in the teaching and the living of the Son of Man who said, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Pulpit Calendar

May 3—Ascension Day.
May 6—Sunday after Ascension.
May 6-13—National Family Week.
May 13—Whitsunday (Pentecost); Festival of the Christian Home; Mothers Day.
May 20—Trinity Sunday; Christian Unity Sunday.
May 27—Second Sunday after Pentecost.
May 30—Memorial Day.
June 3—Third Sunday after Pentecost.
June 8—Sovereign's Birthday (United Kingdom, Canada, Australia).
June 10—Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Children's Sunday; Shavoth (Jewish); Students' Sunday (Methodist).
June 14—Flag Day (U.S.A.).
June 17—Fifth Sunday after Pentecost; Father's Day.
June 24—Sixth Sunday after Pentecost; Nature Sunday.
July 1—Seventh Sunday after Pentecost; Independence Sunday (U. S.A.); Dominion Day (Canada).
July 4—Independence Day (U.S.A. and the Philippines).
July 5—Fast of Tammuz (Jewish).
July 8—Eighth Sunday after Pentecost.
July 15—Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.
July 22—Tenth Sunday after Pentecost; Feast of Ab (Jewish).
July 29—Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 5—Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 12—Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

SEASONS: Eastertide and Whitsuntide.

ALTAR COLORS: Eastertide, white; Whitsunday and Trinity, white; Whitsuntide, green.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

• *One In Christ*

DURING the last war a group of Chinese Christians gathered on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace. As the service progressed, the worshipers realized that someone had come into the rear of their little church. They became aware, as they observed the visitor, that he was a Japanese soldier fully armed and in the uniform of his country. Sensing the uneasiness of the people and seeing their frightened faces, he spoke to them. "Do not be afraid," he said. "I am a Christian, and while I was at my post, I noticed the lights in your chapel. I have come to worship our King with you.—*A. Nelson Doak, First Reformed, Elmhurst, N. Y.*

• *'The Cupboard Was Bare'*

JUST one thing kept Old Mother Hubbard from giving her poor dog a bone. She wanted to badly enough. She made the trip all the way to the cupboard—but alas, the cupboard was *bare.* We want to mean the best to somebody, be some part of a signpost that points the way to a new world. To our friends, to our children, we want to be a compass that indicates the direction for a safe and successful journey through life. But too often one thing ruins that—our spiritual cupboard is bare.—*Russell Van Alen, First Presbyterian, Dinuba, Calif.*

• *America's Worst 'Ism'*

TOO many of us take our freedom for granted. This has been much in evidence recently, when all of us have suddenly become very conscious of the problem of church and state. How true it is that we say very little about our loss of liberty until it is very apparent to all. We speak much about the dangers of communism, socialism, fascism, but could we not

agree that the worst ism in America is "lukewarmism"? For instance, at the last presidential election when men were casting their votes for Mr. Truman, Mr. Dewey, Mr. Wallace, etc., we were told that there came to the polls the greatest number of voters in many a day, and yet in that banner election, only 50 per cent of the potential voters cast their ballots.

"Lukewarmism" is not limited to our era. The comment made by the Apostle John to part-time Christians of his day still applies to our modern churches. "I know thy ways," he quoted God as saying, "that thou art neither hot nor cold: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." —*W. Haydn Ambrose, First Baptist, Lancaster, Pa.*

• *An Index to Our Character*

THE use of money by the American people is a revealing index to our character. We spend billions for liquor, billions for entertainment, billions for pleasure and billions for luxuries, but statisticians inform us that we are giving less and less to churches and charitable organizations. America spends more for chewing gum than she does for God. If the church could have one-tenth of the amount spent for cigarettes in America, she could put missionaries in every nook and corner of this lost world of ours to tell the glad story of the love and mercy of God. The evangelical church doesn't spend as much for all its labors for the Kingdom as the liquor interests spend for advertising.—*William Ward Ayer, Calvary Radio Ministry, New York.*

• *The Little Exasperations*

FOR most of us it isn't heartrending tragedies but the little exasperations that lay waste life. In Proverbs we read, "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike" (27:15). One doesn't have to live with a storm to lose his happiness and his hope. Just the frustrating gloom of a contentious woman or a contentious man or a contentious neighbor or a contentious employer is enough.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain at the University of Chicago.*

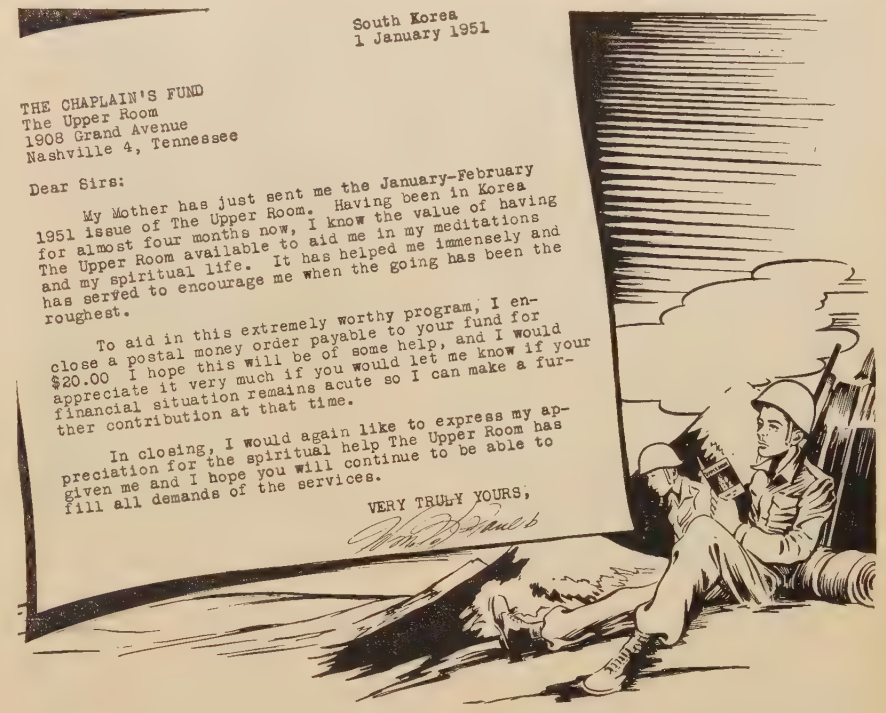
• *The Ultimate Defense Of Democracy*

THE truth is that many American citizens do not use democracy. They read articles about it; they listen to lectures and sermons about it; they talk about it; but they do not practice it as it should be practiced.

Suppose I were to ask this personal question: How many of you voted, or failed to vote, in the last election? Or this: How many of you have written to your representatives in Washington in regard to some pending bill in which you believe or disbelieve? The answers we make to questions like these will indicate just how vital is our belief in democracy.

Part of the failure to use democracy is due to inertia—"Why bother?" Part of it is due to the game of passing the responsibility to someone else. Part of it is due to a feeling of futility —that my voice and my vote won't do any good anyway. So time and again we permit laws we don't believe in to be passed, and other laws we do believe in to fail of passage; we permit our government, national, state and local, to be dominated by persons with whose beliefs and practices we are frankly out of sympathy.

The ultimate defense of democracy will be to practice it. If we do not use it, we lose it. Far more dangerous than the subversive activities of the enemies of democracy are the subversive inactivities of its friends.—*Harold W. Ruopp, Hennepin Avenue Methodist, Minneapolis, Minn.*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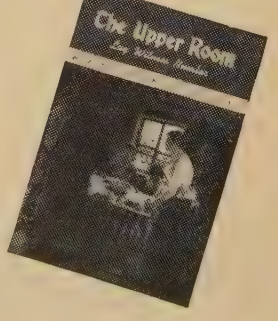

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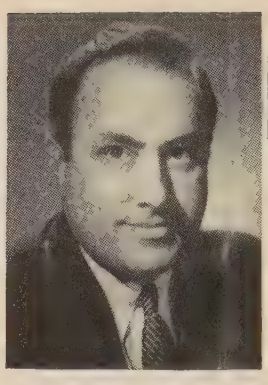


Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

By Precept and Example

THAT the present state of congregational singing is deplorable few will dispute. False conceptions of ministerial dignity and a growing reliance on liturgy have just about ruined it. Given a few more medieval chants and modern complicated "orders of worship" its demise is assured.

The minister is largely responsible for this deplorable and tragic state of affairs. He can "take a text," giving book, chapter and verse; that is still correct pulpit etiquette. But, in some churches, he is not supposed to announce the name and number of the hymns. It is beneath his dignity. The notice in the bulletin now suffices. Consequently half the congregation fails to locate the hymn until a couple of measures before the final "Amen." We flatter ourselves into believing that worshipers follow the printed order closely. Most of them hardly look at the bulletin unless they enter the building early or are bored during the sermon.

In some churches the pastor announces a hymn and then "sets his face like a flint" (Isa. 50:7) and refuses to participate in the singing. Standing in detached aloofness, staring at the congregation like a stern judge, he almost dares anyone to remain as silent as the grim-visaged potentate behind the pulpit. If the preacher isn't going to show some interest in the proceedings at this point, then let him sit down and read through his sermon notes or slip outside for a quick coke. Anything is better than a statue-like specter gazing in awe at the assembled throng.

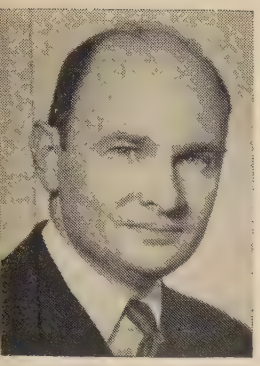
There are other preachers who go so far as to regard the holding of a hymnal unnecessary; yet every member of the congregation is expected to "unite in singing." The least the minister can do is to conform to his own request and set an example. "But I can't sing!" So what? Neither could Larry Parks when he acted the life of the late Al Jolson. But he moved his mouth and wiggled his lips so convincingly that most of us forgot Jolson and applauded Parks. The preacher who can't sing *can* open a hymnal and move his lips with the words, showing that he is interested.

But most preachers can sing! No more stirring music is heard than that produced by the voices of several hundred ministers at a convocation, assembly or conference. Together they are terrific; apart, pathetic. General Grant was supposed to have known only two tunes: one was "Yankee Doodle" and the other wasn't! Whenever the band struck up a number, he leaped to his feet just in case they happened to be playing the national anthem. At least he was interested in what was going on. The minister who doesn't know *Cwm Rhondda* from *Duke Street* or Brahms' "Lullaby" from Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" can show some evidences of concern by the way he holds the hymnal, announces the hymn, invites the worshipers to unite in singing and follows the words. Moses, past his eightieth birthday, burst into song (Ex. 15-1). The joy in his heart overshadowed the cracks in his voice. The first recorded mixed duet, when Deborah and Barak sang of their victory (Judg. 5:1) must have been something to listen to! But the victory we enjoy in Christ Jesus far surpasses the military triumph which inspired them to burst into song.

Dignified worship may mean that the days of the precentor are past. But necessity may soon summon him from the choir loft to share the platform with the minister. What is more dignified than congregations being taught by capable instructors the art of group singing? And what is less dignified than the sight of a large assembly of people standing in stubborn silence when they should be sharing in the joy of congregational singing?

Seminaries would do well to require courses in singing and in song-leading. The average preacher begins his work in a community which appreciates a leader in every phase of public worship. If he deems leading the singing beneath his newly acquired dignity, he is top-heavy with dignity instead of common sense. And the choir can render valuable assistance by swallowing choral pride and singing the melody of the hymns instead of the parts.

Congregations for the most part will follow a capable leader. The minister ought to provide that leadership. If he cannot, he should assign that privilege to someone more capable, and encourage both choir and people to give unqualified support. By his own wholehearted participation in congregational singing, the preacher can and should make it easier for the people to enter into the joy of a satisfying experience of worship.



Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

The Offering in the Worship Service

THE position of the offering in the liturgy determines the nature of the service. If the offering is placed before the sermon, the church will have a two-cycle service, for obviously the sermon will go back to the basic theme of the lesson and in a sense recapitulate what has gone before. If the offering is placed toward the close of the service, the church will have a one-cycle service. Some churches choose one and some the other.

During the last thirty years several basic patterns of divine worship have been suggested. All of them are inclined to close with an act of dedication, of which the offering is a necessary part. The offering therefore always brings to a close a particular cycle of worship. If it is placed before the sermon, minister and congregation will be called upon to finish a complete cycle of devotion before the service is over; consequently they will be called upon to enter into a second devotional experience while dealing with the sermon.

Almost everyone is now familiar with the fivefold pattern of worship which was first suggested by Von Ogden Vogt in his book *Art and Religion.* In that book he analyzes the classic mystical experience of Isaiah as the norm for the experience of worship. He outlines a service that would begin with presentation before God, to be followed by humility and the confession of sin, vitality and the assurance of forgiveness, illumination and the experience of deepening insights into the nature of God's will for man and society, and finally by dedication, of which the offering is the outward and visible sign.

The minister ordering the worship of his church on the basis of this pattern presented by Dr. Vogt would have to make a choice regarding the one- or two-cycle service If he wanted his service to have complete dramatic unity, he would have to begin with the experience of presentation and adoration, move to the confession of sin and assurance of forgiveness, then to the reading and sermonic interpretation of the lesson, and close with the offering and other acts of dedication.

If the minister is willing to run the risk of breaking the unity of his service in the interest of making the sermon the climactic accent, he will complete the service, including the offering, and then either append the sermon or actually begin a second service which includes the sermon.

Some other orders of worship have been presented which are also inclined to place the offering at the close of the psychological worship pattern. In his book *Reality and Worship,* Dean Sperry suggests that the basic pattern of the service is thesis, antithesis and synthesis. This experience of contrast is resolved in the closing moment in the broad movement of synthesis, which of course is likely to include the offering as an expression of the resolution of conflict and the dedication of life to the solution achieved by the synthesis.

The *Book of Worship* of the Methodist Church sets forth a fourfold pattern: (1) adoration of God; (2) con-

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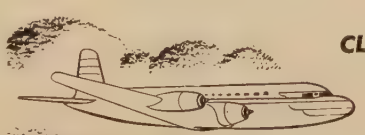

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fession of sin; (3) affirmation of faith; and (4) dedication of life. Again, the climactic moment is dedication. The *Book of Worship* suggests that all that follows in this fourth movement should be in the mood of dedication, including the sermon, for dedication should be centralized in the sermon. This position, however, is psychologically a *tour de force* and highly unsatisfactory. The sermon may encourage dedication by the insights it reveals and the emotions it prompts, but dedication is much more likely to follow rather than to accompany it.

In my book *Form and Freedom in Worship*, I suggest another pattern of worship based upon a simplification of the Isaiah design, the pattern implicit in such liturgical treasures as the Te Deum Laudamus and the 19th Psalm. Suggested are (1) adoration of God; (2) communion with God; and (3) dedication to God. Again, the final movement is one of dedication, epitomized by the offering.

The minister must decide whether or not he will use one of these patterns and keep it intact by giving his service liturgical unity. He may feel that to do so makes it possible for his people to have a complete devotional experience, a sound and satisfying experience that actually leads to the climactic moment of dedication provided by the offering and the quiet moments that accompany it, during which the people have ample time to think of the relation of the whole service to their needs and opportunities. When they make their commitments, they offer their gifts of money as an outward and visible sign of their inward and personal dedication. On the other hand, the minister may feel that he dare not risk the possibility of this dedication's occurring and that therefore the congregation ought to be sent out with the closing words of the sermon in mind. If this is his view, he has a two-cycle service to administer.

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PERSISTENCE is essential to accomplish anything. A job is done only if we keep at it in spite of failure and discouragements. Thomas Edison said his invention of the incandescent lamp was his most difficult. For 13 months he tried every known metal as a filament. All failed. The newspapers poked fun at him. His financial backers withdrew their suport. One day he was idly making a thread of lampblack. This gave him an idea that maybe his answer was in the vegetable kingdom. He began carbonizing threads of lampblack. It took five hours to do it. The first thread broke when removed from the mold. A screwdriver fell on the second. A third broke when put in the tube. He used a whole spool of thread, and a second. The effort continued for two days and two nights. At last the filament was inserted, and the lamp glowed. For 45 hours more Edison sat and gazed intently at this most marvelous invention, the product of patient persistence. *—J. R. Brockhoff, Redeemer Lutheran, Atlanta, Ga.*

Preachers in Print

A Plea for Preaching

IF this reviewer were teaching homiletics in a seminary, his classes would have a new textbook come October. At the first class session the seminarian preachers would be told that while the new text left considerable to be desired it is far and away the best volume available on the art and craft of sermon construction. If a Pulpit reader should write in the future, as many have done in the past, asking what book he might find most helpful in brushing up on his preaching techniques, he will no longer receive the "any of the following" clause which has characterized previous answers to that question. He will be told that the tome he is searching for is **W. A. Sangster's**★★★★ THE CRAFT OF SERMON CONSTRUCTION, Westminster Press, $3.00, scheduled for publication on October 22.

DR. Sangster is the minister of London's Westminster Central Hall. His stature both as a churchman and as a preacher is a growing one. His recent book★★★ THE CRAFT OF SERMON ILLUSTRATION (Westminster, Oct. 1950, $2.50; reviewed in the January 1951 Pulpit) proved his ability as a writer in the homiletical field. The forthcoming volume establishes him as the foremost authority on homiletics of this generation. Recognizing the fact that "preaching is in the shadows," he pleads for a return to the high view of preaching held by the Protestant reformers. "Men were ordained, in their view, to the ministry *of the Word* and the sacraments. Both! Both together!" Ministers, he believes, need to balance their pastoral duties. Activities must be kept in a subordinate place. Ministers must again become preachers, not just group work executives, directors of community centers and/or counselors.

IN succeeding chapters, Sangster classifies sermons according to subject matter, structural style and psychological method. He gives special attention to the importance of the beginning and conclusion of a sermon and exhaustively considers both the dos and don'ts of preparing the whole message. Unfortunately he has little to say about the delivery of the sermon. Perhaps that is to be considered in a third volume. There are times, too, when one wishes that the American edition might have had some of his expressions translated into the American idiom. At one point in Chapter II there is a story which may offend some American Negro clergymen that might well have been left out. (We cannot cite the page since this review is being written from galley proofs.) One also wishes that the author had paid more attention to the current trend to relate preaching to the calendar of the Christian year. As a whole, though, the book is very readable, demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the American as well as the English pulpit, and is the most complete and practical consideration of the subject written in recent years. Standing alone, it is not a full enough treatment to supplant entirely Broadus, Reu and the other classic volumes on homiletics. But in later revisions, if combined with the earlier book on sermon illustrations and strengthened by a discussion of serman delivery, it will surely surpass any of those in value because it speaks to the needs and in the language of our own time rather than of two or three generations ago.

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS.

ROUNDUP

WINDOWS TOWARD GOD. By **Charles H. Schmitz.** Abingdon-Cokesbury, $1.25. These eighty-six brief meditations were delivered by Dr. Schmitz, head of the Protestant Radio Commission of the National Council of Churches, over station WNDR in Syracuse, N. Y. The titles are striking and attractive, such as "Dogs Refuse to Worry," "Fourteen Pockets," "A Fly on a Bald Head." This book is intended more for the uninitiated than as a book of deep devotional reading for the well versed Christian. Though comparable to the similar essays of Stanley Jones which meet the needs of the seasoned Christian, the book accomplishes its purpose well as a modern news story type devotional manual.—*Frank E. Titus, All Saints' Episcopal, Syracuse, N. Y.*

WHEN SORROW COMES. By **Grace Perkins Oursler and April O. Armstrong.** Doubleday, $2.00. In a book almost devoid of theological argument, it seems a pity to devote three consecutive pages to a promotion of Mariolatry. Otherwise, the book contains much helpful material for those confronting the death of loved ones. Unusually high readability. Little attempt to answer, "Why?" Any comfort the book may bring will come from the anodyne of *doing*, rather than *believing*.—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, U.S.M.A., West Point, N. Y.*

LADDER OF LIGHT. By **Harold Blake Walker.** Revell, $2.25. A stimulating attempt to demonstrate the realism and relevance of the Beatitudes against a modern mood of self-indulgence and bovine complacency. The author envisions not only a program but a power, for apart from Jesus Christ the Beatitudes are held to be irrelevant because impossible of fulfillment. The three initial rungs of the ladder are steps on the road toward self-conquest. The remaining rungs lead on to a self-filling by way of dedication and commitment. Flashes of penetrating insight and numerous literary references combine to make the volume one more sterling champion for "life organized around a supreme concern for the will of God."—*Chilton C. McPheeters, Wesley Methodist, East Norwich, N. Y.*

FAITH HAS EYES. By **Victor E. Beck.** Augustana, $1.50. Though sometimes wordy and a bit stilted, these random verses reveal the sincere and earnest heart of a devout minister of Christ. Marked throughout by a gentle mystic spirit, they show warm human compassion and vital religious faith, however traditionally the latter is expressed. While the book will be of special interest to ministers as it deals, often unconsciously, with the preacher problem and the preacher grace, it will prove rewarding for any Christian who takes seriously his call of God.—*George H. Orser, Fairmount Avenue Methodist, Richmond, Va.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

March	April	This Month	An analysis based on reports from leading religious book sellers and from the reading of The Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.
4	4	1	**So We Believe, So We Pray.** *George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.75
	1	2	**Anointed to Preach.** *Clovis G. Chappell. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $1.50
3	2	3	**Here I Stand.** *Roland H. Bainton. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $4.75
1	3	4	**Life of Jesus.** *Edgar J. Goodspeed. Harper,* $3.00
	5	5	**The Gospel in Modern Thought.** *Alan Richardson. Oxford,* $2.00
		6	**Christianity and History.** *Herbert Butterfield. Scribners,* $2.75
	6	7	**The Christianity of Main Street.** *Theodore O. Wedel. Macmillan,* $2.00
10	10	8	**The Belief in Progress.** *John Baillie. Scribners,* $2.75
		9	**Communion Meditations.** *Edited by Gaston Foote. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $2.00
6	9	10	**Mr. Jones Meet the Master.** *Peter Marshall. Redell,* $2.50

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE KEFAUVER COMMITTEE'S revelation of crime in the underworld and its corruption of our politics only brings to light conditions which everybody has long known to exist. The real significance of these revelations, however, lies in the cynicism with which the public has been habituated to regard them. Anything substantial in the way of reform is not expected. Why? Because the moral fiber of the people has disintegrated to the point of indifference and impotence. Senator Taft recently declared that we are in a period of unprecedented decline in political morality. Evidence of this is shouted at us daily in the newspaper headlines. The gambling mania is both an effect and a cause of our moral breakdown. Our society is saturated with the spirit of getting something for nothing. The billions of dollars annually handed out in the form of social security undoubtedly tends to weaken the spirit of thrift and individual responsibility. Consider our family life. Is it one in four or one in three marriages that goes to pieces? The divorces and shameless tandem marriages of conspicuous people, like certain members of the family of a recent President, one of whom was recently married for the fourth time, evoke hardly more reaction than the lifting of an eyebrow. In this instance, sacrilege was added to shamelessness by actually requesting the officiating judge to use the Episcopal service with its "till death do us part." The moral decline during the past quarter-century, which was already at an ungodly low, has been precipitate. The degradation of our social sanctities surely lays a mandate upon the churches to take united counsel for collective action on a mass scale to bring the nation to its senses.

Our Precipitate Moral Decline

The Book of the Month

THE ROYALTY OF THE PULPIT, *by Edgar DeWitt Jones. Harper, $5.00.*

THIS IS a book about the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching given at Yale University every year, skipping only three, since 1872. Some of the seventy volumes in which these lectures are published are found in the libraries of most ministers. The Beecher lectures are recognized as the richest gold mine of interpretation and inspiration in existence dealing with the preacher's art. Years ago Dr. Jones began to collect these volumes and when he was asked to write a book about them he took three years in which, as he tells us, he literally immersed himself in the task. What he has done is to humanize the lectureship. His light and genial touch upon the personality of the lecturers, his recovery of innumerable and most precious circumstantial details of human interest in connection with each of the lecture events, his interpretation of the lectures themselves and his delicate sense of intimacy with them—those he has known personally and those who have long since passed to their reward—these characteristics of his treatment have lifted the whole lectureship to a romantic level of charming realism without derogating in the slightest degree from the dignity and seriousness of its subject matter. The genius of Dr. Jones in conversational companionship displays itself (without self-display) in making vividly alive the Lyman Beecher lecturers and their contribution to the highest vocation to which any man may aspire.

A Thought for the Month

PRESIDENT TRUMAN talks unceasingly of the "leadership" of the United States and urges the people to accept his policies because they are demanded by our "leadership." The halls of Congress echo this conception of our national role. The press, the radio and even the churches take it up. The nation has become inordinately self-conscious under this dangerous stimulus. Our fears and anxieties are real enough, but they are only aggravated by the boastful implications of leadership. This is bad psychology and worse ethics. Instead of leadership our nation should be guided by the concept of responsibility. Admittedly, the U. S. is a great power. And power always implies responsibility. We have vast material, military and moral resources. To spend these resources under the obsession of leadership generates truculence; and truculence alienates friends and is likely to leave us isolated to carry the burden alone. Responsibility, on the other hand, tends to a rational humility; it wins friends and elicits their cooperation. Moreover, the consciousness of leadership tends toward fantastic policies because it carries no inhibitions. But the sense of responsibility is realistic because it provides a measure of moral obligation. A responsible agent—person or nation—is morally obligated not to commit suicide. In the case of the nation—to cite an extreme possibility—this obligation would sternly measure its policies against the danger of ultimate economic insolvency. The people would have a deeper sense of confidence and security in the present crisis if they felt that the policies of the government were adopted under a solemnizing sense of responsibility unmixed with the illusion of leadership.

Leadership and Responsibility

Charles Clayton Morrison

For the Record—

WE have been gratified by the splendid welcome our readers ave given the three columnists who rite monthly in the fields of preach-ıg, church music and worship. Since ıe January issue when these new fea-ıres were first included, scores of tters have been received telling of ıe help preachers are getting from ıe comments of Morton S. Enslin, rnest K. Emurian and Clarence Sei-enspinner. We are not surprised. hese men have been chosen because ıey have long since been recognized s specialists in the fields covered.

Morton S. Enslin was chosen as a ulpit columnist because he knows reachers and preaching and how to rite about the latter in such a way ıat the former will read it. He is no fficial fault-finder. The preacher soon ealizes that. But his incisive manner f getting right at the heart of the ıatter he is discussing, which seems lways to be a matter that needs iscussing, commands and holds the reacher's interest and frequently esults in a resolve to take the good octor's advice. As professor of New estament at Crozer Theological Semi-ary and editor of the *Crozer Quar-erly*, Dr. Enslin has made a lasting mpression on the men who have passed ırough that school. As an author he as influenced many others.

Ernest K. Emurian of Portsmouth, 'irginia, was chosen to write "The linistry of Music" because he is at ne and the same time a highly suc-essful pastor and a well known au-ıor-composer. His anthems and hymns re widely sung and his two volumes f dramatized stories of hymns and ymn-writers are unexcelled in their eld. He is also widely known as a ecturer on church music and hymnol-gy. We asked him to write for The ulpit what he has been saying in his imitable way in those lectures. In oing that he is bringing our readers ıe point of view of a pastor who is o well recognized in the field of music ıat he does not tremble to take a tand contrary to the prevailing fad mong the musical highbrows.

Clarence Seidenspinner is the long-me pastor of First Methodist, Racine, Visconsin. As a contributor to both ecular and religious magazines and s the author of three outstanding ooks, his viewpoint on worship is nown and appreciated. His volume ntitled *Form and Freedom in Worship* a classic in its field. We chose him s a Pulpit columnist because he rep-esents an increasingly large group f evangelical Protestants who are ediscovering the value of order and turgy in worship. He is rightly called ıe prophet of this new and important mphasis in American churches.

Dr. Seidenspinner's view will not lways be that of either of his fellow olumnists. Nor theirs his. But to-ether, we feel, the three of them con-titute as balanced and able a team s Protestantism can offer. G. E. H.

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Founded 1929

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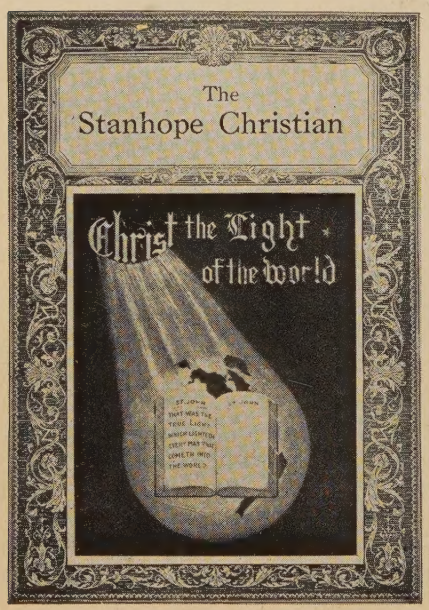

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